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Dear Miss Howard:

In reply to Sadie N. Nissen's question and the question in general, "How soon should children dance on their toes?": I think there is no more frequent question asked a dance teacher by mothers of three and four year olds, or beginners. To it I always reply, "You may dance on your toes when your muscles are developed sufficiently and your feet are strong enough to support your body. They say other teachers put children on toes during the first lesson. My reply is, "Will you be responsible for your kiddy's feet?" "Oh! no!" the mother will say. "Neither will I," is my reply.

There is nothing so painful to watch as the antics of a four year old on toe struggling to keep up. The foot instead of being strong and powerful is weak and the ankle

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Price: 25 cents per copy; subscription price, $2.50 a year, $4.00 for two years, in the United States and possessions; Cuba, Mexico, Panama and Canada, $3.00 a year. Other countries, $3.50 a year.

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turns frequently. However, these beginners are not on their toes.

Students who attempt to dance on their toes without knowing how, often injure their feet permanently and never dance again. It is possible for anyone with a little practice to stand up on the toes, if he or she wears the hard toe ballet slipper, but merely standing on the toes is not dancing and even walking about on toes, with knees bent and to the front, is not dancing.

I have tried for fifteen years to educate the parents and students in technique. Beginners *will* stand with the weight on the inside of the foot. This is worse than careless: it is dangerous. Many students who have not been taught to stand with weight on the outside of the foot become flat-footed and suffer from fallen arches. Then they blame dancing instead of the ignorant teacher who allowed them to make this terrible mistake of going on toes too soon.

I certainly agree with Miss Nissen and I would like to shake hands with her. Maybe some day I will.

Sincerely,
ABBIE TILSLEY,
Nashua, N. H.

•

My dear Miss Howard:

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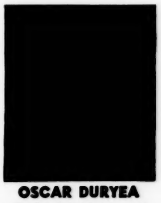
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difficult toe number, I am beset with entreaties from mothers to permit their darling babies to get toe shoes. However, after explaining to them how very detrimental it may be to them physically, I have been quite successful in changing their attitudes and really feel it has helped my business to a much greater degree than it may have injured it.

Personally I have never seen a child under eight whose toe work was so very outstanding although there may be exceptions. In my estimation toe work is only for children who are interested in professionalism or for those who desire to become teachers. Soft toe ballet work is so sweet and gracful and develops poise, personality and mus-

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cular coordination, so if there is a doubt, why take the chance?

In my studio children under eight years of age are not permitted to take toe work and those over eight must have had sufficient ballet and barre work to develop feet and leg muscles to such a degree that the children do real toe dancing instead of "toe shoe dancing," which is a disgrace to the dance profession.

May I also add in defense of ballet, all my pupils must take ballet for foundation in all types of dancing, whether they like it or not. That is a rule in my studio and, really, I don't have much difficulty in enforcing it, for I feel that my experience should warrant that much confidence and respect from all my pupils and their parents, and if they don't trust in my judgment they don't belong to the class of people I cater to.

Very sincerely, MAE ROSE, Miami, Florida.

•

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In the last issue of THE AMERICAN DANCER you published two letters that I find ex-

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tremely interesting, so much so that I have decided to renew my subscription which I had allowed to expire for just the reason Miss Nissen discusses in her letter.

I could not allow my students to see photographs of tiny children standing on their toe shoes—*not* on "pointes"—and explain why they could not do the same thing. Usually the positions are very bad and any good teacher knows the harm that is being done the children. I spend too much time trying to correct improper beginnings not to feel very strongly on this subject. Many mothers are ignorant of the harm they do their children by allowing them to study with a teacher who either does not know her business or does not care what she does to her pupils.

I do not take children under eight, except in very exceptional cases, and whenever I refuse to take a very young child I explain to the mother the reason for my refusal and almost always she is grateful.

As to the letter from Mr. Mathis: I should like to say in answer to teachers who say they must teach what people want, that most people don't know what they want, as regards dancing. I was told, years ago, when I began to teach, that I must "teach all kinds of dancing." I teach ballet and character dancing and nothing else, and get along very well. Also, one of my former students who has a school here has followed the same line and is also doing well.

It is fairly simple to educate the parents since most of them are simply ignorant of dancing, but are not stupid. I feel that while there are several branches of dancing, no one person can properly teach *"all* kinds

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• PRO and CON . . .

of dancing." It takes at least one lifetime to learn to teach the ballet.

It seems odd that the D. M. A. has not gone into these matters. Let us hope they will.

I have enclosed a check for my renewed subscription as I wish to watch the issues and see what can be said in favor of ruining the dancing future of small children.

With best wishes, Sincerely,

LISA GARDINER,
Washington, D. C.

DEAR MISS HOWARD:

Here's the hand of an old-timer who has been traveling every Main Street in the country for I don't know how many years. Let me tell you this is a new senstation finding THE AMERICAN DANCER magazine on stands in every little town I see. Thank heaven I can find it when I want it, and not a month later. Now every Main Street can get just a little closer to the big town.

Here's something I'd like to get off my weighted down chest immediately. I'm with the fellow who wrote that stuff on keeping America's male dancers out of the army. I hope there are a few people left in this country who realize as I and others do that

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• **PRO and CON . . .**

art in America will never be kept alive by snatching its practitioners away from the practice of their art. In fact, you'd be amazed how many, many people are on my side, on our side, as regards this business of the male dancer and the draft. Please, Miss Howard, throw your weight in on this side.

Say, what's happened to your magazine recently? Its reading content and pictures are getting appeal like nothing under the sun. Maybe I'm just a drooling balletomaniac or whatever they call those guys. I'm nuts about dancing even though I am not a professional, but I follow THE AMERICAN DANCER, and I know good reading when I see it. After that story on Carmen Amaya, I'd give up my job traveling to follow her around the world.

Congratulations on your fourteen years of plugging for the dancer, and again my thanks for getting the magazine to where it can be found in the remotest dust bowl and desert towns.

Most sincerely,

FRANKLIN JAMES,
Yuma, Arizona.

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The American DANCER

Editor ■ RUTH ELEANOR HOWARD ■ Publisher

JUNE

1941

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Vol. XIV No. 8

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as Venus in Judgement of Paris
Miss De Mille is currently appearing at the Rainbow Room
Photo: Carl Van Vechten

■

To the Right—

GRACE THOMAS,
Soloist at Radio City Music Hall
Photo: Bruno of Hollywood

■

THE AMERICAN DANCER is the official publication of THE DANCING MASTERS OF AMERICA, INC. *and its 24 Affiliated Clubs.*

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Assistant Editor: LEONARD WARE

■

Music Editor: BAIRD HASTINGS

■

Advertising Manager: ALVIN WRIGHT

■

Hollywood Representative: DORATHI BOCK PIERRE
8148 Mannix Drive, Hollywood, Calif.

■

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THE AMERICAN DANCER
250 West 57th Street, New York, N. Y.

Summing Up

by

RUTH ELEANOR HOWARD

Birthdays are like observation points on a mountain road. They are good vantage points from which to survey the progress made—and have a look at where the road leads.

■

THE AMERICAN DANCER is celebrating another birthday this month—its fourteenth. That makes it old enough "to come to the table with the grown-ups" but still young enough to have uncounted years of energetic service ahead . . . old enough to know what it (the dance field) is all about . . . but still young enough to be uninhibited by the fears that beset the "I-remember-whens".

■

These are extraordinary times—there is no question of that. Never before have we had an opportunity to serve our country as we have now . . . never before, probably, have our loyalties been so heavily counted upon.

■

And what does this mean to the dance business? It means that in the unlimited emergency which the President of the United States has proclaimed every dance teacher must consider himself a purveyor of recreation and a custodian of public health . . . and proceed accordingly. We *know* that social dancing is a cure-all for jitters and nervous tension and all the mental ills to which we see our fellow citizens becoming prey . . . we know that healthy bodies are built through supervised rhythmic exercise—through dance training in *any* form—and these two factors are as necessary to the United States today as planes are to Britain.

■

Our job is to get America dancing . . . for the general good of all concerned. And on the occasion of its fourteenth birthday THE AMERICAN DANCER re-dedicates itself to that cause.

THE COMING OF THE NEW ICE AGE

An Excursion Into It Happens on Ice reveals the New Child Wonder of the Ice-Skating World

by **HELEN FRASIER**

BETTY ATKINSON
Star of It Happens on Ice

Children, another Ice Age is upon us!

No, no. Not the one which comes creeping down from polar tundra to freeze us for eternity in its cold embrace. Not that one. This one comes attended by pomp and circumstance, by acres of ice rinks popping over the scarred landscape like pimples on a schoolboy's face.

We have always had plenty of respect for Hans Brinker and his silver skates but now (and this hurts us worse than him to say it) Hans could cut only a sorry figure among the skaters of today, to whom a mere figure 8 is a thing to be sneered at. The innocent day of whipping around an ice-stage to waltz time is finished. You can't just skate and think you're getting somewhere, buddy. You've got to know how to sing, mime, fall on your silly face and twirl a baton with a hey-nonny-nonny. All this, and dance too.

Cast your eye, if you will, upon the Center Theatre in Radio City and *It Happened on Ice,* the ice show therein, and behold a spectacle which squatted down there last fall and threatens to outlast the war.

And whom do you think has turned up on the musical program? None other than our hard-worked friend Peter Ilych Tschaikowsky. Somehow or other his ballet music for *Swan Lake* and *Aurora's Wedding* has become tangled up and turned into the briskest Swan Lake and Aurora you ever dreamed you'd lay eyes upon. If Catherine Littlefield is responsible for the ice-dancing in these spectacles, as the program indicates, then all our blessings on her flaxen head. And Dobbin! Remember Dobbin? His last job was in the Ford Ballet at the New York World's Fair of 1941. He is now emoting on ice but with much less pathos. We are glad to see he was not led out to pasture to die. After Donald Duck, he is positively our favorite actor.

Dobbin, and Tschaikowsky on ice are as nothing, however, to the dazzling item which bursts upon you early in the first act. You are busy swallowing shavings of ice (which have come flying over where the footlights should be, but aren't), which you can't avoid swallowing if you sit within ten rows of the stage and your mouth is open (which it certainly is).

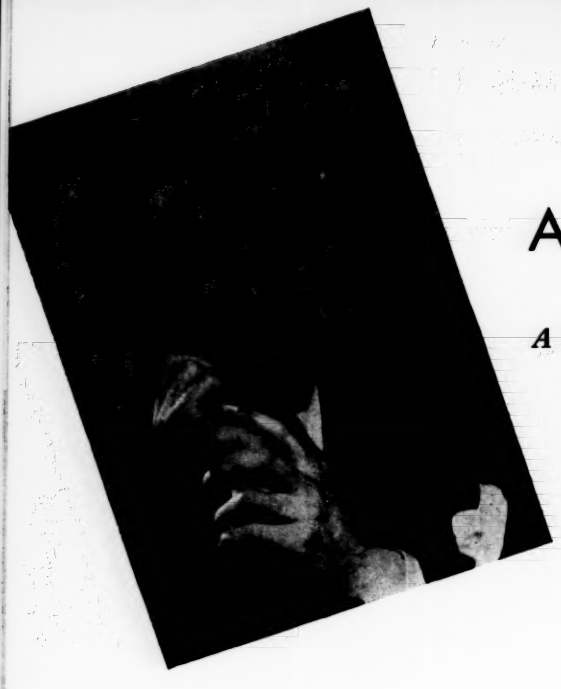
Before you can collect yourself and spit out the ice, your jaw hardens into surprise at the appearance of a trim figure in nautical costume in high peaked cap which spread-eagles four or five times around the stage, before stopping, transfixing your paralysed eye with a whirling-twirling, streamlined, diamond studded baton. This body hurls itself into space á la Superman, doubles up, straightens out, splits in mid-air and *pirouettes* in a fine frenzy (never ceasing to twirl that baton) and does everything but frighten you to death. "Is this human," you wonder. "If it isn't a robot, or an optical illusion, then what on earth is it? Well, anyway, it's somebody about three hundred years old who has spent most of her years practicing without let up in three or four specialized arts."

It is nothing of the sort. The figure comes to a stop and a young face and friendly grin are visible. It is eighteen year old Betty Atkinson of California, of God's Country, the land which produces giants in the earth in these days. Consider this eighteen year old marvel, la belle Atkinson; she has at her age spectacular command of at least three varied and difficult professions: dancing, skating and baton-twirling.

Some of you may wonder what brought the phenomenon of baton-twirling down upon us like a visitation from cuckoo-land. Why, you ask, is it at all necessary for anybody to twirl a baton on top of skating, dancing and whatnot. This, friends, is a much removed and ultra-emasculated version of the brandishing of lance, sword and spear, by the warrior in battle. Its function is superficial today. It is a decorative adjunct of military shows and it has wormed itself into the theatre via the parade.

When Betty was thirteen, a friend of her fathers, who is a retired officer, taught her something about the handling (or twirling) of batons. Betty says that he acquired his knowledge from long and intimate association with the Don Cossacks, who, to anybody who has ever seen them, are an unforgettable sight with their familiar brandishing of rifles overhead as they ride by magnificently. The horsemanship of the Cossack is, of course, world-renowned. His handling of his rifle is somewhat secondary, but it was this feat which was directly responsible for America's first Drum Majorette. Betty learned to twirl a baton in six easy lessons and for five years has been twirling up and down the country on stage and off, in theatre and out.

(*Continued on page 27*)



THE DAYS OF A CHOREOGRAPHER'S YEARS

A Retrospective view of Antony Tudor since his advent to America nearly two years ago

by **HELEN DZHERMOLINSKA**

SOME MEN are born to live their weary unwelcome lives resentful of each day that passes, of each new task of living that becomes to them an increasing burden. They open their eyes with dread each morning and think, "Another day I've got to get through somehow." Somehow, few things have any meaning for them. They live. They die. They are forgotten by man. They follow the unchanging pattern of human behavior in every era of decline and social decay. Other men live, however, whose mere existence is a challenge to the former, a contradiction of the theory that the bungling human race would do well to clear off the earth and let a superior entity, like the ant, take its place. This other man is perhaps an anachronism in today's world. This man faces each day with the anxious thought, "One day less in which to do my work; one day less in which to accomplish my desire." He belongs to the Golden Age. He is the unchanging, eternal Artist. He is the justification for the belief that somehow or other, man has the right to survive the bloody, unbelievably bitter pass to which he has brought himself. This man is never forgotten; he leaves his unforgettable mark upon the most imperishable records there are, the hearts and minds of men.

Have you ever heard of Clerkenwell? Perhaps not. Clerkenwell is, or was, one of London's most noisome slums, a breeder of crime and sorrow and poverty. Do you want to know what Clerkenwell really looked like? Then look over at New York's Tenth Avenue, Hell's Kitchen, or Brooklyn's Red Hook district and begin to imagine them on a much larger and more vicious scale. In comparison the notorious Limehouse district was quite ladylike. This is the pesthole which produced Antony Tudor, a creature who belonged rightly to the Golden Age. An artist and thinker of the first magnitude. A worker.

Today as then, his environment is a mere accident. It is only incidental to the real world in which he dwells. And that is a creative world in which he is a constant and assiduous craftsman. If you say of him at his worst that he is a dweller in an ivory tower then at least have the grace to say that his tower is very close to earth. And out of it he does come to gather strength and the material the craftsman works with. Over his head pass war and plague and social unrest and the foolish passions and meannesses of society and the professional world in which he works. He looks neither to right nor to left. For him time exists only to give him the means to obey the compulsion of the artist within him. His tale of days are full of unending work.

His productions are the fruit of a new and gripping school of choreographic thought. Devotees of the ballet may now cease their languishing backward glances at the Diaghilev era and look forward to Antony Tudor. For ten years since Diaghilev's death no new choreographer of Tudor's magnitude has appeared and balletomanes feared that ballet was entering another era of gradual withering and decline as it did in the second half of the 19th century. Tudor's advent has laid that fear to rest.

In appearance he is thirtyish, tall and slender, with a British accent and red-brown hair which is thinning out. His countenance is cheerful; his disposition unpredictable. It is singular to think that this unsentimental, dispassionate extrovert has fathered the searing drama of *Dark Elegies* and the surface sentimentalities and barely glimpsed underlying evil of *Jardin aux Lilas*.

In the Clerkenwell to which Antony was born in the midst of the most crushing poverty, he lived with his parents and an older brother. Tudor père was a provisioner. By the sweat of his cockney brow he somehow saw his son through the usual number of school years and until young Antony was big enough to go out to earn his own bread and butter. At sixteen he was considered big enough for that. He left school when his father got him a job with the Smithfield Meat Market as an errand boy. In this capacity at the bottom of the workingman's social scale, he had to be up and about at 6 A. M. to fetch and carry mugs of tea from a nearby pub for the older clerks. He knocked off at 3 P. M. and was then free to go about his real business. Those three years at the Smithfield Market were coincidental with three years of afternoon at the Craske school and classes with Mme. Rambert. This was no accident, his going to ballet class with the money he earned as first, an errand boy, and then as a clerk at the market.

Single-minded Antony had long ago made up his mind how he proposed to spend his life, and it was not as a future clerk at the Smithfield or any other market.

When he was only a tiny tot he was taken to the Christmas Pantomimes which are as much a part of the English child's background as western movies and baseball are to young Americans. This first communion with the theatre filled his little boy's heart with a longing to be one with this glamourous world. The theatre was the old Saddler-Wells, and he even remembers the name of a song in it which has relentless pursued him down the years. It was called *Footsteps in the Snow.* It was probably in 1913 when he first saw a dancer whom he thinks was Loie Fuller. His parents took him to this performance as a treat. He walked about for several weeks afterward with glazed eyes, while his family worried about his health. His remarkable choreographic memory still retains impressions of this performance. From then onward he spent a great deal of time imitating performers he saw at theatres. Where other children imitated actors and soldiers, his special forte was the mimicking of the dancers of that day, among whom he remembers perfectly the artists of the Diaghilev company. Tudor Senior did not look with much favour upon this mimicry so young Tony had to harden his heart and keep his own counsel.

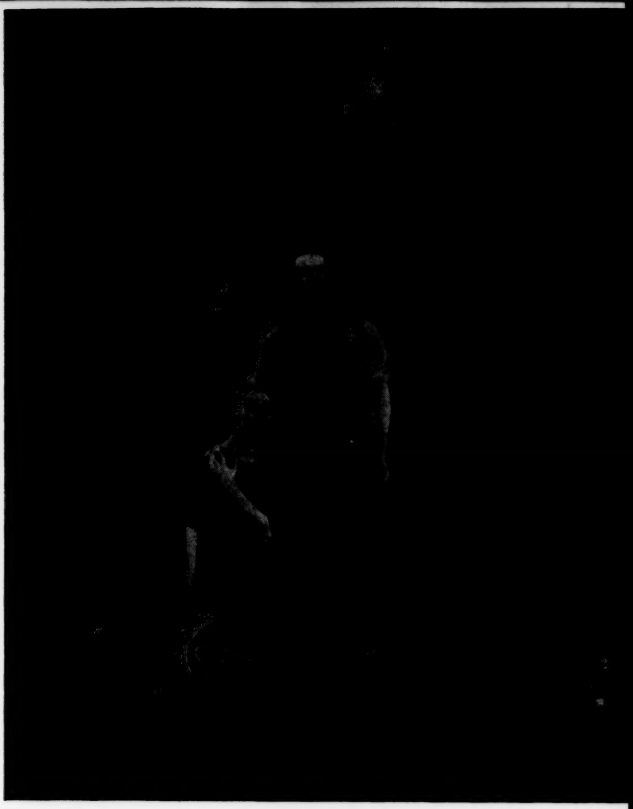
It was during the Smithfield period that he had his first opportunity at the stage. Frederick Ashton was going to produce a musical at the Palladium and wanted Antony for it. This play unhappily never came off, but in order to rehearse for it he gave up his annual summer holiday of two weeks to be at rehearsals. The enormity of such a sacrifice could be appreciated only by one who spent fifty-two weeks a year at the Smithfield.

When, in 1929, he left the Smithfield Market to its own destinies, over the protests of his family, who saw him as a solid British business man, he gravitated to the one spot in England to which his heart had been leading him for years. He entered the Ballet Club as a pianist and secretary in exchange for a small salary, a tiny room and all the lessons he wanted. The Ballet Club was unique then as a center for most of England's emerging ballet artists such as Pearl Argyle, Margot Fonteyn, Hugh Laing and Harold Turner. While it nursed into maturity dancers and works of great distinction, it was only a tiny, unsubsidized group comparable in this country to the Humphrey-Weidman group.

It gradually grew upon this clear-eyed enthusiast that he was not going to become the great classical dancer he so passionately desired to be. He became aware instead of his increasing interest in and talent for composition. Therefore towards choreography instead of dancing he bent all his energies.

In 1931 he emerged with his maiden effort called *"Cross-Gartered"* after Shakespeare's description of Malvolio in *Twelfth Night.* An atmospheric ballet suggests some research so Tony journeyed to Florence for several weeks to absorb what he could of Florentine manners and get an acquaintance with its ancient splendours. For weeks he stood about staring at palaces, at cobbled streets and the sluggish Arno seeing nothing but a succession of choreographic patterns. He came back to England with every movement of his ballet neatly recorded on paper. This, he admits, was the first and last time it ever happened. Subsequently, he has produced only when face to face with his dancers. The reason for this, he says, is that away from the reality of a rehearsal, his imagination soars to highly impractical adagio and feats beyond the execution of any normal body.

The reaction in the press to *"Cross-Gartered"* was reserved. "He is promising," they said. "However, we'll wait for his second ballet to say anything final." For this critical grace Tudor was grateful as he felt he had only begun to stretch his wings. He recollects with some inward delight that Massine was present at this debut and that when he was presented to the great man, he was stunned by Massine's



glowing praise of him. This, he also recollects, was the first and final word from Massine on the subject of Antony Tudor and his emergence as a choreographer. Towards his subsequent successes, Massine has maintained an unbroken silence. In contrast to Massine, George Balanchine's attitude towards the Tudor ballets has been from the very beginning one of constant belief and admiration. Balanchine, says Tudor, was of any choreographer he knew, the kindest in his attitude towards him as a fellow artist in the same field.

The ballets which followed *"Cross-Gartered"* were in chronological order: *Lysistrata,* with music by Prokofieff, which enjoyed a moderate success. *Adam and Eve,* a highly profane theme danced by Anton Dolin. Of this, Dolin's mother, who was present, said it was the lewdest theatre piece she had ever seen. The London critics likened it to a cocktail. Dolin has since asked for its revival but with no success. Tudor believes it to be a dated piece recognizable as belonging to the late Diaghilev era of hard and superficial novelties. *Adam and Eve* was done for the Camargo Society. The following production of *Atalanta* was done by the Ballet Club. To simpler people the name *Atalanta* might suggest the tale of the hard-won princess and her apples of mythological origin, but not to Tudor. He saw it as a far-eastern drama laid in archaic times and for it he used music from Javanese sources. If he was expecting to give the public a jolt he was not disappointed. Similarly, his next ballet, *The Planets* upset the press and public by looking like nobody's conception of the mythological roster of planetary characters. Instead the characters appeared as signs of the Zodiac. London relished this as much as though Diaghilev were walking the earth again and doing the unexpected. In *The Planets* Kyra Nijinska, Hugh Laing and Pearl Argyle had a huge success. Following this, came *The Descent of Hebe,* in which Tudor danced the first male role. This ballet set no one on fire, and was the least conspicuous of all the Tudor repertoire.

(*Continued on page* 28)

Living Traditions of the Hindu Dance

by **RAGINI DEVI**

DANCE-DRAMA, in India, was a highly developed art, centuries before the Christian era. The dance theatre of India is one of the oldest forms of mimetic dance in existence. Ritual episodes and epic dramas were performed in vivid dance action by groups of mime dancers in temple ceremonies and seasonal festivals.

To understand the traditional art of dancing in India, one must realize at the outset that the fundamental aspects of the art are quite different from those of the West. *Natya* literally means the art of dramatics and includes music and dance as well. Indian classical drama gives pre-eminence to the gesture in place of the spoken word. Being metrical in form, it was well adapted to rhythmic action and the expression of mood, passion and fancy.

Indian dancing has a technical code of attitudes and movements more complex than the technique of modern ballet in the West. Various turned out positions of the feet and limbs—the deep knee bend, the pirouette—and a complex artistic code governing rhythmic movement, and gestures—characterize the classical technique of the Hindu dance.

Movement and Expression.

The artistic composition of movement and its classification into the various types of action is carefully described in the *Natya Sastra,* the *Abhinaya Darpana,* and other ancient treatises which have recorded the traditions and codes of the drama and the dance.

Nritya is the art of depicting by means of rhythmic movements of the body, and in gestures, the various moods, sentiments and ideas, which are also shown in the expression of the face.

Nritta refers to movements and patterned gestures having no identity with the meaning of words. It is a form of pure dance, enchanting in itself. *Nritta* adds lustre and diversity to the mime episodes or *Nritya* by way of contrast. Its suggestive mood is regulated by the nature of the postures and gestures and the tempo and style of the accompaniment.

Rasa—the Aesthetic Mood

The Hindu code of aesthetics defines *Rasa* as "flavour" or sentiment. The *Rasas* are nine permanent moods—fundamental emotions common to all living creatures, and they are depicted in all forms of Indian art excepting architecture.

The exposition of the Rasas or sentiments in the Hindu dance, involves rhythmic use of limbs, head, and various parts of the body according to codes of aesthetic expression and technique. The emotional theme of the dance or mime episode indicates the type of dance movement and expression required.

Significance of Gesture

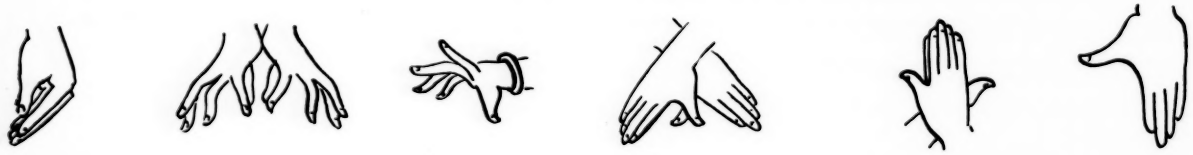
Gesture is to the Indian dance what the musical note is to music and the word to the poet. The rhythmic interpretation of the story-theme in the gesture language and postures of the dance gives new dimensions of beauty both to the poem and to the melody in which it has its setting.

The language of gesture is based upon twenty-four root symbols called *Mudras* or *hastas* (hands)—single hand postures which are the basis of the gesture code of dancing.

Each gesture is described in Sanskrit by naming the fingers and parts of the hand and indicating how the fingers should be stretched, separated, bent, or combined to form the *Mudra.*

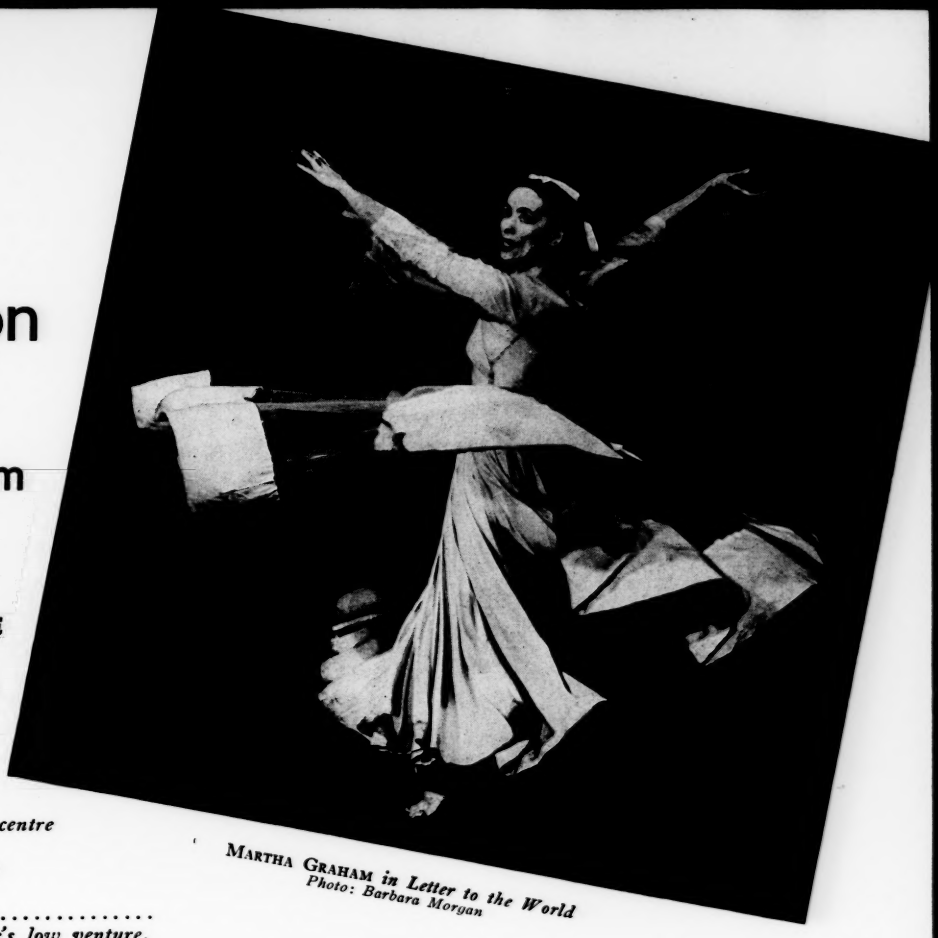
(*Continued on page* 32)

Figures below: MUDRAS (*gesture symbols*). 1. ARDHA-CHANDRA (*half-moon*), HASTAS (*single and combined*). *Usage*: *Consecration half-moon, battle axe, seizing by throat, aversion, rejection, etc.* 2. MATSYA (*fish*). 3. GARUDA, *Eagle mount of* LORD VISHNU. 4. UTPALLALADMAKA (*Full blown white Lotus*) *usage*: *Lotus flower, beauty, desire, contempt, to reject, inquiry, breast.* 5. *Lotus hands combined. Usage*: *Lotus flower, offering, etc.* 6. PADMA KOSA (*Lotus bud*) *usage*: *Worshiping with flowers, eating, rejecting, etc.*



Flights Beyond The Horizon with Martha Graham

by **HENRIETTE BASSOE**



MARTHA GRAHAM *in Letter to the World*
Photo: Barbara Morgan

"Each life converges to some centre
Expressed or still;
Exists in every human nature
A goal,
. . . . . .
Ungained, it may be, by life's low venture,
But then,
Eternity enables the endeavoring
Again."

—EMILY DICKINSON

RESTRAINT is the only road to the pure projection of an art. That may sound a little like old fashioned discipline. But, confidentially, that is just what it is.

How we hate to think of discipline from our superiors. And how utterly impossible it is for most of us to discipline ourselves. And yet, if we study the lives of people of genius, we shall soon discover that they exercised the most severe self-discipline in order to accomplish great feats and works.

All during history leaders and teachers have urged mankind to endeavor again with more intelligent effort to improve the techniques of crafts, arts and of living.

But the constant sorrow to these people of genius has been the lack of initiative—*life's low venture* which has surrounded them.

Martha Graham is a person of genius, who is continually saddened by the human frailties of students of the dance. She feels the responsibility of her influence upon students and gives, almost too generously, much of her nervous energy to guide them to be excellent technicians.

There is always, she feels, a likely possibility that there may be among the students, a person of unusual talent and inspiration, who may fall short of greatness through lack of technical skill.

Technical skill will not give greatness to a dancer who cannot contribute the creative qualities of genius. But it is certain that one cannot be great without the power of technical skill to present dramatic truths with clarity.

There is so much ground to be covered in the modern dance, Martha Graham believes, that a student must work far beyond his average conception of the physical and mental effort required and the coordination of both necessary to develop the dance vocabulary for expressing emotional ideas.

Students, able to work under a great teacher every day, must work and work hard. But the students, who cannot afford to work under a teacher every day—limited to once or twice a week, must work even harder. Self-discipline, most agree, is not exercised by many and those not under the daily stimulation of a big personality, more often than not, fail to accomplish the elusive prize—technical skill.

Martha Graham's own experience is a success story of one who had to work alone, relentless with self-discipline and self-encouragement in the face of much adversity.

She was born to mature at a time when her art, the dance, was destined to change, away from the traditional classic forms to a modern and more plastic form. Martha Graham felt the trend of her time and worked and read and consulted people in the dance and related arts until she found what she wanted.

At that time abstract art had been explained in books, but of the abstract dance nothing had been written. And there is still not very much printed upon the subject.

Since the essentials of one art may often be applied to another, Martha Graham studied abstract art and then created abstract dance.

At first the critics were unkind to Martha Graham. But she had perfected her technical skill (a purely personal vocabulary) to a point where she was exciting and affected her audiences, even though they did not comprehend her work. With time the critics and audiences have grown to understand and appreciate the work of this artist.

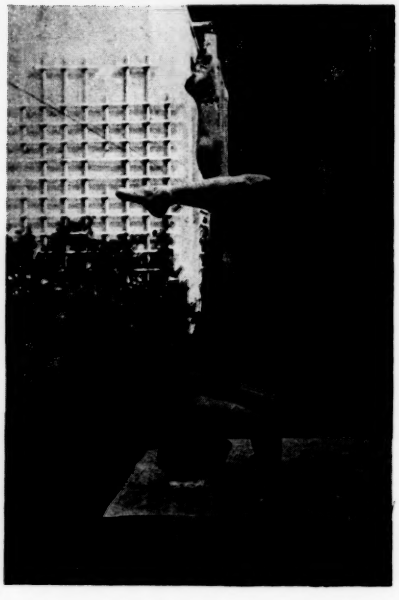
To-day, Martha Graham creates and stages dances and theatre pieces which are timed to our generation. The theme

(*Continued on page* 30)

YOUR AGE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT

An Interview with Josephine de Mott Robinson

by **RUTH ELEANOR HOWARD**



MAYBE YOU, too, have speculated on occasion as to why people who are so incredibly old that they are news are so often vague about how many years they have lived. Josephine De Mott Robinson has supplied the answer—and, strangely enough, it is tied in with the old saying "you are only as old as you *think* you are."

Trite? Just an old "saw"? You won't think so when you have heard Mrs. Robinson's amazing life story. Incredibly old? No one ever dreamed of applying that phrase to her—incredible, yes—but old? Never!

"Oh! Of course I could figure out how old I am—but what would be the point?" she asked. "It only militates against you to be aware of your age. You've no idea how often I hear young girls (she teaches debs and models how to walk properly at the Traphagen School) say 'Oh! yes, I used to do so-and-so but I'm getting a little old for that now' and their mental slump toward middle age is almost visible as they say it!

"I know how shocked I was on the occasion of my return to the circus ring in *Jumbo* a few years ago, to hear Billy Rose announce me as 'the oldest bareback rider, returning to the circus at the age of 75'!!! Standing in the wings, waiting to go on, I groaned under the weight of the years he had put on my shoulders and thought, with a sinking feeling, 'Good Heavens, I'll never be able to get a license to drive my car in New York after this!' Reporters asked me later if that was my true age and I told them I'd have to admit Billy Rose must be close—but he certainly didn't have the date!

"Monotony is aging, too", she confided—and certainly her life being the very reverse of anything monotonous would be safe foundation for such a conviction. Born into a circus family, Josie de Mott began to ride in the show at the age of 5. Her mother's people before her had all been circus stars and one reason Mrs. Robinson advances now for the disregard of birthdays even among the children is that "we were always too busy sewing on spangles.

"My father *must* have been trained as a ballet dancer," she recalls, "for all our training which he alone gave us was pure ballet—and *good* ballet at that!" The children in the family went to school in the winter but their physical development via the *barre* was never allowed to be neglected.

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Lully

The First Unifier of Ballet

by **BAIRD HASTINGS**

JEAN-BAPTISTE LULLY was the first important musician to compose for the ballet. His work came at a time when it was possible to unify ballet through a closer collaboration between musician and dancer because all music was regarded as danceable and consequently the unification of ballet helped dance forms and techniques as well as music forms. Even though *ballets de cour* had existed for about seventy years before Lully became active, they had been very haphazard affairs and while they were magnificently decorated spectacles, the productions were disjointed in theme and the performers lacked the precision to unify them had they had unity of theme. Lully was successful because he had genius—he created the minuet, the French overture, and reformed the recitative, *and* he pleased the king. His personal characteristics disclose a plain, short man, shrewd in business, temperamental, equal to any occasion; he treated his equals like inferiors and his superiors like equals.

The seventeenth century is called the *Siecle de Louis XIV* on account of the cultural advances and military exploits of France, and so it is natural that we should expect to find that Lully was attracted to the French court. When he came to Paris in 1653, he found the court cluttered up with Italian musicians who had been imported by Mazarin, the prime minister during Louis XIV minority. Lully was an Italian himself but he quickly saw that to win a secure place at the court he would have to assume French manners. He did not have to wait long to put his theories to use because he was fortunate enough to please the king by his dancing and was made composer of the Instrumental music a few weeks after his arrival. He continued to please the king by the flattery which his creations lavished on Louis. Also Lully and the balletomanic young king frequently danced side by side in several entries, and Baptiste gave the king a daily dancing lesson for sixteen years. At first known as a dancer and violinist, Lully rapidly gained increasing skill at the harpsichord and fame through composing. By 1661 when he became Superintendent of court music, a French noble, and married, Lully had managed to exclude all the "foreigners" formerly connected with the presentation of *ballets de cour*. The fact that Lully's marriage contract was signed by the king and several princes of the blood is remarkable testimony of the favored position which he occupied. Most artists did not succeed in associating with the nobility; Lully even secured the favor of having his son follow him as Superintendent of music.

At this point the *ballet de cour* consisted of an overture played by the strings of the orchestra, which, numbering 45 in all, already included flutes, oboes, bassoons, trumpets, drums; then a prologue which eulogized the king. This was followed by a series of entries in which courtiers and professionals came forward elaborately camoflaged with costumes and executed a dance as intricate as the clumsy costumes permitted; then at the end the whole court joined in the Quadrille. The entries were punctuated with sung intermezzi. These ballets, which were given on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays during the winter when no fighting was possible, hardly resemble our *ballets d'action* although they are closer to some divertissements like *Aurora's Wedding* (Tchaikowsky-Petipa).

While making the most of the great variety of stage settings available, perhaps Lully's greatest accomplishment was his insistence on unity of theme and a sense of progression which he secured by eliminating the "spontaneous" entries and by writing all of the music for most of the productions 1661-1687. Not only did he compose the music, but he often arranged the dances and danced himself and sketched the scenery as well as having a hand in the book. He worked almost exclusively with certain trusted collaborators. Berain did most of the curtain designs, Vigarani made the stage

LULLY *in one of the five roles he danced in Ballet de la Nuit 1653*

machines which were so necessary to keep the interest of the audience while it was just learning to appreciate ballet. With Moliere Lully created the *comedie-ballet* of which the outstanding example is *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (1670); in this work Lully danced his greatest success, he made the court *"mourir de rire."* This ballet has been revived several times, recently with choreography by Balanchine. In the *ballet de cour* Lully's usual librettist was Benserade. The poet and lawyer, Quinault worked with Lully on the ballet-opera or lyric tragedy. Lully was the founder of the French Academy and Opera as well and after the founding of the Academy in 1661 another creator came into tthe chosen circle in the person of the dancer, Charles Louis Beauchamps. Beauchamps was more specialized than Lully and the musician let him arrange most of the choreography. It could be called choreography ever since Arbeau's pioneering effort, *Orchesographic* (1588). Now great strides were made in dancing technique.

Purely the accident of exceptionally talented dancers en-

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Via the Grape Vine

by **VERITAS**

MIA SLAVENSKA *will desert the ballet audiences in New York for a while to star in a Hollywood movie*
Photo: Constantine

NANCY KNOTT *and* MICHAEL MANN, *who have been in Louisiana Purchase since the beginning, are now doing benefits for Britain in Oklahoma*
Photo: Boris Bakchy

Prior to its departure on June 6 for South America and a good-will tour blessed by Washington, Lincoln Kirstein's American Ballet Caravan gave three gala dress rehearsal performances at the Hunter College Little Theatre to the largest collection of celebrities and notorieties ever assembled under one roof. Packed in an area less than one yard square were visible such personages as John Martin, Walter Terry, Martha Graham, Irina Baranova, Vera Nemtchinova, Florence Rogge and Anton Dolin. We nominate for prizes the gowns worn by Mesdames Chase and Gollner, and the hat worn by Baronova. Nobody has ever seen such a teeming crowd of balletomanes of all ages and colors anywhere before; probably no one ever will again. Antony Tudor danced a role in his new ballet *Time Table,* in place of Lew Christensen, originally slated for the part, who, after two months of strenuous rehearsal, sprained his ankle twenty-four hours before the performance. That's life. None of the company's repertoire of new or old works shall be put on view publicly until after their return from South America, somewhere near Christmastide. Buen Suerte, dancers of the Ballet Caravan: come back with laurels! . . . After months of griping and grumbling among a section of the unionized ballet dancers in New York, loud enough to crumble the walls of Jericho, that there was no democracy in AGMA; after wails about taxation without representation, in response to a call by AGMA for a dancers' meeting to elect their own representatives into the union, twenty dancers showed up! Twenty out of a total of several hundred. Grumblers, speak up when the opportunity shows itself, or forever hold your peace! . . . As a consequence of this scandalously poor attendance, the members present voted to postpone the elections, the first they have ever had, until after Labor Day. . . . We are all wearily aware of the innumerable occasions upon which dancers in opera have danced and received nothing for their pains, but an occasion when they didn't dance and did get paid for it makes us think we must be going down the rabbit hole behind Alice. The corps de ballet of the Monte Carlo Opera Co., which was scheduled to produce *La Traviata* at the Majestic Theatre in May but didn't, received payment in full for their non-appearance, the party responsible for this wizardry being none other than that

RICKY RICCARDI, *who has just returned from Hollywood and the movies, is now appearing in Panama Hattie*
Photo: Volpe

much maligned (by dancers) organization, AGMA. . . . Real Estate Notes: Mme. Vera Fokina has purchased the Chateau Fleur de Lys in Yonkers, formerly the home of the late Francis H. Sisson, president of the American Bankers Association. . . . We quote from the London Dancing Times of May, 1941, an excerpt which speaks volumes: "I hope that the members of this company realize how much their visits mean to our lives. Militarized and disciplined, many of us need such stimulus and diversion at more frequent intervals. Let us hope, even if only for the sake of conscript balletomanes, that all male members of these touring ballet companies are long exempt from military service. They serve their country well in dancing for our entertainment; at the same time nurturing an art which, after the war, will surely play an ever increasing part in the present neglected cultural life of the world." (Trooper A. H. Franks, somewhere in England.) Only recently several newspapers carried spreads of idle soldiers on the streets of small towns near various camps entitled *What Shall We Do With Our Idle Soldiers?* THE AMERICAN DANCER feels that a far-seeing government can do much about this by taking dozens of unemployed ballet dancers off relief and putting them on a government project to entertain soldiers in camps throughout the country. Surely, stiffening the morale of the American soldier is as important to defense as the production of airplane parts. An army fights with its men, and its men deserve something to keep them in touch with the theatre and a lighter side of life than is on tap in camp and drill. . . . The Summer Schools Cast Their Shadows Before Them: The Cape Theatre at Cape May, N. J., will be the stamping ground of Leon Danielian this summer, who, together with his sister, Hercelia, will conduct classes in ballet. Leon expects to appear in concert, however, at Jacobs Pillow some time in July, while Hercelia will leave the school long enough to appear for a week with the Paper Mill Playhouse. . . . Harder to get into than the Prophet's paradise will be Jack Potteiger's ballet school on Long Beach Island near Harvey Cedars, N. J. The school is near Old Barnegat Lighthouse, one of the oldest in America, and the island is the site of the most unusual Norwegian fishing colony outside the mother country. The beach at Old Barnegat is the scene of nightly folk-dancing by the Norwegian fishermen and the school's guests. The faculty will include among others Patricia Bowman, Karen Conrad and Leonard Ware, as guest teachers. . . . Jacob's Pillow will rejoice in the person of Edward Caton, as guest teacher, in addition to Dolin, Tudor and Shawn. For awhile we were under the impression that Caton had half a mind to throw everything to the winds and cloister himself in a monastery. Looks like Jacob's Pillow won. . . . Fort Riley, Kansas: Olaf Olgen, recently snatched by the army out of the Metropolitan Opera's musty arms, is getting his feet slowly adjusted to unfamiliar army shoes. A despatch from camp says he already feels as much at home on a horse as in ballet class. Knowing Olaf, we refuse to believe this. Olaf is going into a crack cavalry regiment soon. Tarantara! . . .

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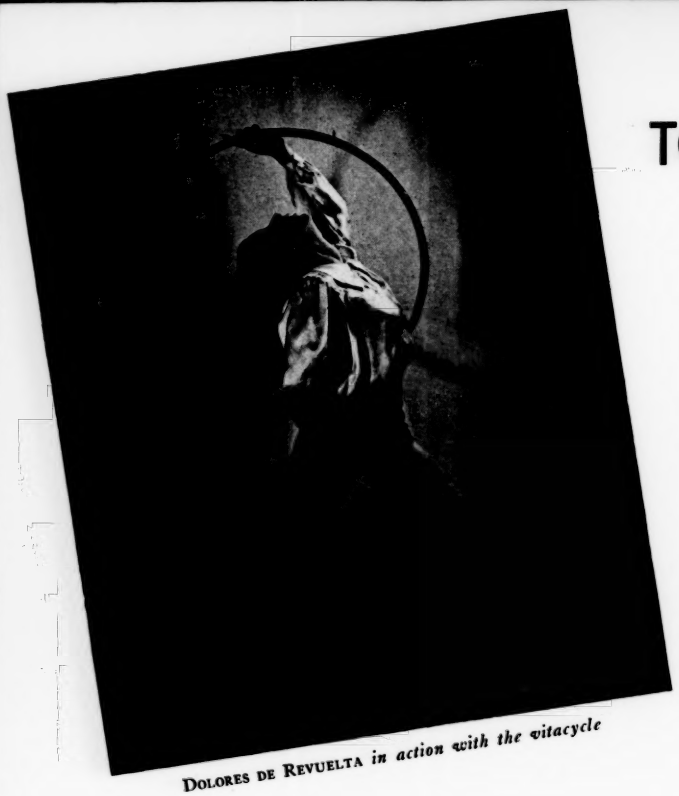
Leon and Eddie's famous hostelry is building its new floor show around the swing adaptation of Jaromir Weinberger's *Schwanda* polka and fugue. It is called *Swing Me a Polka* and it has been recorded by Associated Music Publishers. This unique Czech composer is happy to have his operatic work adapted and presented in this way. . . . Kosti Vehanen, for ten years accompanist to Marian Anderson, has brought out a book called *Marian Anderson: A portrait.* Vehanen left for Finland on May 28 to rest and to study orchestration with his friend, Jan Sibelius. He recently collaborated with the choreographer Dimitri Chutroo on two ballets called *Marquis Fly* and *Two Fountains.* These ballets will be on view this summer at the Radiant Center. . . . The Columbia University Press declares: "No west-

(*Continued on page 22*)

MARINA FRANCA *of the Massine Company is scheduled for the ballerina role in a Broadway show in the early Fall*
Photo: Bruno of Hollywood



DOLORES DE REVUELTA *in action with the vitacycle*

TODAY–

IT'S THE RUMBA

Including a description

***by* PHILIP DE REVUELTA**

THE DANCES which men and women do and why they dance at all is as important a question as is the technique of teaching how to do them well. For many decades dancing as a social accomplishment has been enough. And while it is still a highly important factor in life as it is lived today, something more and more vital is entering into the picture. Dance students today vary in age from eight to eighty and they attend classes looking, for the most part subconsciously, for a release from the tension which has been growing the past two years.

It is as if the centuries are rolling back to the primeval and the security, with its attendant lack of fear, which came with civilization, is being destroyed by wars and threats of wars. People are again living under the tension which man knew when behind every stone and in every tree there lurked the danger of attack and destruction. Again people are looking for release from this tension. Again they are finding it in dancing.

The tremendous and nation-wide popularity of the South American dances lies in part, I believe, in the fact that they have meaning that they were originated as a release for other peoples burdened with cares. The Rumba, Conga, Bolero, Danzon, Son and Samba are all dances that use syncopated rhythm. Since the Rumba is most frequently demanded and played, I am going to give you a simple description that will make it possible for anyone to do this fascinating dance.

RUMBA

The exercises are described for the gentlemen. The ladies use the opposite foot. Do the exercises in place at first. With feet together, weight on the right foot:

No. I. Mark time with the heels. Count 1, 2, 3, stop. First left, right, left, stop, and alternating with right, left, right, stop.

No. II. Move your knees from right to left and from left to right and alternate on the left side. Count 1, 2, 3, stop, and again 1, 2, 3, stop, using the shifting of the weight from right to left and from left to right, you then alternate the count in succession.

No. III. After you have accomplished the smooth and rhythmic movement with the heels on the floor now combine exercises I and II, marking the time clearly with the heels and producing the syncopation with the side to side movement of the knees. When you finish the three counts, stop, before making the connection to begin on the opposite foot. The connection consists of closing the knee of the free foot in to the knee of the foot that is supporting the weight.

This coordination of the syncopation of the knees with the heel beats, continuing the count of 1, 2, 3, stop, produces the movement of the hips. Care should be taken that the movement of the hips is produced by the action of the knees and feet and not by a conscious movement of the hips. And now concentrate on the upper part of the body. When the weight is on the right foot, support the tension in the right chest. Remember you must keep the weight over the center of balance. Coordinate the tension of the chest from right to left and from left to right with the movements of the feet and knees.

To get the proper swing in the rumba, work on the following exercise: With the feet and knees together, bend and straighten the knees to produce a springlike motion. Relax as you bend the knees and tense slightly as you straighten them so that the accented or stronger movement is up. Say down and UP, down and UP, and count one, two, THREE, one, two, THREE. You are now ready to add the shuffle. With the weight on the right foot bend both knees as before and as you straighten them move the left foot to the left. Bend both knees and bring the feet together and straighten the knees. Repeat several times, alternating right and left. Next shuffle from side to side without stopping when the feet are together. Bending both knees shuffle to the left as the knees straighten. Bringing the left foot back to the starting point as you bend both knees again, shuffle to the right as both knees straighten.

Returning now to the time step in which you were marking time with the heels and producing the syncopation with the side to side action of the knees, counting 1, 2, 3, stop, we are now going to add the shuffle. With the weight on the right foot, begin the time step on the left, marking left, right, left, shuffle right. Count 1, 2, 3, shuffle. Bring the feet together to produce your connection and begin again on the opposite foot. After practicing the shuffle from side to side, repeat the same exercise described above but shuffle to the back instead of the side.

The shuffle to the front is done in much the same way. With the weight on the right foot and without moving the feet, bend the left knee (count 1), shuffle front, straightening the knee (count 2), and with the leg straight, bring it back to the starting point (count 3). On the same foot begin the time step, shifting the weight left, right, left, in place. You have just completed a shuffle front on the left side and the time step. Repeat this movement, beginning with the shuffle on the right, the time step, marking time with the heels right, left, right, and stop with the weight on the right foot. Count 1, 2, 3 (bend, shuffle, brush), and 1, 2, 3 (time step, marking time with the heels). After you have mastered the shuffles to the front, the side, and back, we can now give our attention to the hesitation step. All of the exercises described so far have been done

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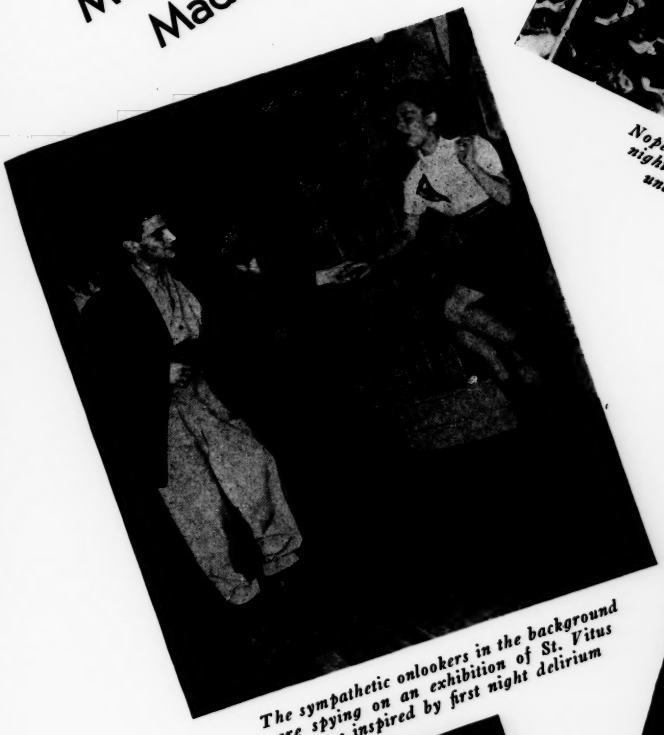
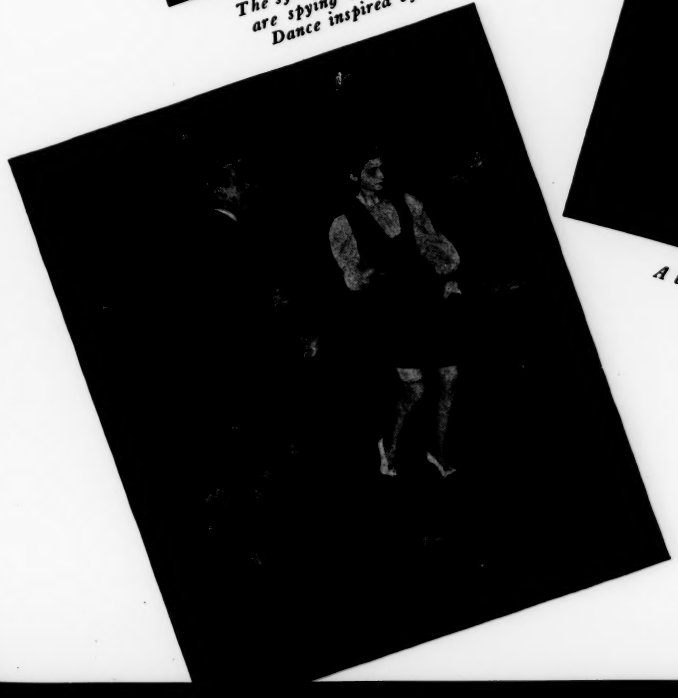
Jam Session at Monte Proser's Dance Carnival Madison Square Garden

Nope, this isn't Times Square on Election night. It's a gathering of the rug-cutters under MONTE PROSER'S *palm fronds*



The sympathetic onlookers in the background are spying on an exhibition of St. Vitus Dance inspired by first night delirium

A bird in the hand's worth two on the floor, we always say



Getting in shape for the next football season, Mister?

VIA THE GRAPE VINE

(*Continued from page* 19)

erner knows more of Indian Natya than La Meri. She knows more perhaps, of the ethnography of the dance than anyone else. This book is the most systematic, illustrated account of the subject that has been published in any language for at least two thousand years." We quote from the critique on Mme. La Meri's *Gesture Language of the Hindu Dance.* It is no exaggeration to state that this great artist has accomplished through her book and her school something without price in the cultural history of American art. During the past year, the School of Natya has had twenty-five reunions, each illustrating a new phase of Hindu dancing. . . . In August, Dewell, Sloane and Pearce will publish a collection of dance photographs of Martha Graham by Barbara Morgan. If the photo in this issue is indicative of its contents, then its excellence is unquestionable. . . . Clang! Wedding bells are ringing for Kyra, daughter of Adolph Bolm, recently wedded to Richard Hubbell. . . . Nobody but the stork and a couple of hundred thousand people know there is a baby on its way with Alice Cannon on the receiving end. She'll get no end of practice now in knitting tiny sweaters and socks which will be somewhat a change from Radio City Music Hall. . . . Georgie Tapps opened on May 24 at the Hotel Plaza with a seven minute dance based on the life and music of George Gershwin. When Georgie (Tapps, not Gershwin) isn't working he can usually be found on the Rockefeller Plaza skating rink with Shirley Paige, the *Pal Joey* ballerina. . . . A collector's item for dance lovers is the February-March bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art, for it contains, with some delightful reproductions of pictorial material, an enlightening survey of the Dance Archives which was established as a branch of the Museum Library in 1939 on a two-year trial basis. . . .

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One person who never runs out of a variety of unexpected situations is Helen Fromòvich, who has been putting on a ballet for the *Aida* which was presented on June 7 and 8 at the Jolson Theatre by Zachary Ross and the National Negro Opera Company. She claims to have lived through some unusual opera experiences in her time but nothing like arranging a traditional opera ballet for all negro dancers . . . Catherine Littlefield's on ice again! She is again arranging an ice revue, this time for the Luna Park World's Fair of 1941 under the banner of Albert Johnson. It is entitled *Stars on Ice,* which sounds cool and bright. We earnestly hope that the lovely Catherine will tear herself away from the ice long enough to really devote some of her energies to the theatre of the ballet . . .

Concert Notes: On June 14 the Film Workshop presented Marian Lawrence and her group in dances of India, Bali and Java at the Master Institute Theatre. Miss Lawrence distinguished herself again as a dancer of merit and was supported by a very capable group of four from La Meri's School of Natya. The costumes for the group were donated by Mme. La Meri. . . . Lisa Parnova and Barton Mumaw announce a new dance partnership. No concerts have been given this season but there are many planned for the coming season. . . . *Review Iberica,* third of a series of Coffee Concerts was recently given at the Museum of Modern Art, and over and above the coffee, was crammed with guitarists, singers, and flamenco dancers, among whom are numbered Antonita and Juan Martinez. . . . On May 21 at the Kamin Bookshop, Valeska Gert, mime, demonstrated abstract, concrete, sound and word dances. . . . The *Grenelle Dance Hours,* a novel series of concerts being planned for next season by Helen Grenelle, will present such dancers as Margaret Severn and George Chaffee, and will introduce new choreographers and talent. . . . The fifth in the series of Coffee Concerts at the Museum of Modern Art featured Voodoo and Inca dances and music, the songs by Elsie Houston and the dances by the Grupo Incaico. . . . A ballet called *Latin Quarter* with music by Manuel Garcia Matos, and choreography by Antonio Triana was given an only performance on May 22 at the Guild Theatre. It concerned itself with post-fiesta activities at dawn in a back-street tavern and the effect upon the humorously strange types who populate this usually tranquil quarter. Besides Triana, well-known in this country from his association with the company of Argentinita, there were Rosita Montenegro, Luisita, eight-year old gypsy dancer and a large company including Nina and Zabal. The guitarist of the evening was Geronimo Villarino. . . . In a performance of Halka at the Chicago Opera House on May 18, Janina Frostowna of the Polish Ballet was co-starred with the tenor Jan Kiepura. Miss Frostowna is a colorful and spirited character dancer who has more recently been seen in concert, as well as in the Polish Ballet, with Felix Sadowski, and has been received warmly by audiences in Chicago and New York. . . . That pleasant and intimate little dance theatre, to be known henceforth as the Jan Veen Studio Hall in deference to Hans Wiemer's recent change of name, was the scene of the first Boston recital of Vonn Hamilton, formerly of the Metropolitan Opera ballet. He was assisted by Evelyn Barrile and presented a varied and ambitious program. . . . Welland Lathrop, West Coast dancer made his first appearance here in a program of original modern dances at the Theresa L. Kaufmann Auditorium. He was supported by a cast of seven, and costumed by Mary Grant. Edward Sporer was the musical director. . . . His most outstanding dance was one called Johnny Appleseed.

Awake and Speak! is the title of a presentation of Bruhs Mero, the dancer and choreographer, which was shown at the Dance Gallery four Saturday and Sunday evenings during May. . . . The success of Winslow and Fitz-Simmons in their South American concert tours augurs well for other concert groups traveling southward. They will return to Buenos Aires in late June to do a repeat series of concerts. Latin-America composers have shown genuine interest in offering them music and in writing for them.

There is no denying that Ricky Riccardi, who toils with the town's loveliest in *Panama Hattie,* likes them in either Panama or New York. Part of his setting up exercises consists of hanging over the balcony of his pent-house on 53rd street studying the girls through an assortment of telescopes and opera glasses. Yep, we caught him at it! . . . Marian Marsh, alias Jill Townsend, the Brunhilda of the dance, who raised the thermometer to boiling point at the *American Jubilee,* last year, is pushing off for Buenos Aires and the *Tabaris* with a company of six, on June 20. Two other alumni of *Jubilee* in this group are Eleanor Boleyn and Mary Woods. One of Miss Marsh's numbers is a killer-diller by Jack Potteiger, who is now dancing at *Radio City Music Hall.* The company has been sentenced to four months at the *Tabaris,* which is our notion of very little punishment.

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JOSEPHINE *and* ALBERT BUTLER, *New* YORK *Ballroom Stylists, prominent among those engaged in summer teacher course activities*

BULLETIN

DANCING MASTERS of AMERICA, Inc.

by WALTER U. SOBY

NORMAL COURSE AND CONVENTION AT NEW YORK

A TOTAL of 80 hours of Dance Instruction has been scheduled for the Normal Course and Convention sponsored by the Dancing Masters of America, Inc., which will be held at the Hotel Astor, New York City, this summer. The Normal Course of 36 hours opens on Monday, July 28, with six hours per day of instruction lasting six days.

A 44 hour program is planned for the Convention which opens with the President's Ball, Sunday evening, August 3, an annual social event where members and their relatives exchange greetings, many of whom only meet once a year at D. M. of A. Conventions. The Convention will be held in the spacious Grand Ballroom at the Astor. Starting Monday morning, August 4, at 9 o'clock, there will be seven hours' daily instruction in all kinds of dancing, ending Friday, August 8.

The Faculty Committee, consisting of President Leroy H. Thayer; A. J. Weber, Convention Chairman; Vida Godwin, Dean of Women; Edna R. Passapae, Director; Julia Mildred Harper, Director; Oscar Duryea, Director, and Walter U. Soby, Secretary-Treasurer, have selected very fine faculties for the Normal Course and Convention.

For the Normal Course, the faculty includes Catherine Littlefield, who will present a 12 hour progressive course in Ballet; Johnnie Mattison, 6 hours of Tap. Each of the following will teach three hours: Madame Sonia Serova, Musical Comedy and Children's Routines; Dorothy E. Kaiser, Novelty Routines; Johnny Plaza, Acrobatic; Sam Abdullah, Baton Swinging; Lawrence Hostetler, Ballroom, and A. J. Weber, Ballroom.

Those who are to teach at the Convention will be Anton Dolin, Ballet; Madame Sonia Serova, Ballet and Children's Dances; Jack Dayton, Novelty Tap; Dolores Magwood, Baton Twirling and Dances; Alberto Galo, Exhibition Ballroom; Rudolfo D'Avalos, Rumba, Conga and Tango; Edna R. Passapae, Ballroom; A. J. Weber, Ballroom; Johnnie Mattison, Lindy; Oscar Duryea, Ballroom. Benjamin B. Lovett, Dance Master for Henry Ford, will present an Old Fashioned Dance Program, Monday evening, August 4. Ruth Eleanor Howard, Editor of THE AMERICAN DANCER, will present the Annual AMERICAN DANCER Night on Tuesday evening, August 5. There will be a two-hour ballroom instruction period followed by a volunteer party stunt hour on Wednesday and Thursday evening, August 6 and 7. A banquet is scheduled for Friday night, August 8. Business meetings will be held each afternoon at 5 o'clock except Friday.

As usual, non-members can enroll for the Normal Course but those who are to attend the Convention must be D. M. of A. members or members' relatives and assistants.

TODAY IT'S THE RUMBA

(*Continued from page* 20)

in place. Many teachers make the mistake of teaching steps before the pupil has mastered even the first fundamental of syncopation and thus we see many dancers who have not learned anything beyond the foot patterns and actually dance a fox-trot to rumba music.

The hesitation step described next is the first step with which you move about the floor. Stand with the feet together—the weight on the right foot. Relax the left knee and produce a circle with the knee. Bring the knee in close to the right and move it forward and to the left to complete the circle, coming back to the starting point. Repeat, counting three counts from the first position to the completion of the circle. Count 1, 2, 3, and rest on the heel, 1, 2, 3, and rest on the heel. Now connect this hesitation or swing of the knee with the time step. Count 1, 2, 3, during the circling of the knee and shifting the weight to the same foot, begin your time step, counting 1, 2, 3, as you shift your weight left, right, left. Beginning the circle with the right knee, repeat the circle on the right and the time step, starting right.

With the weight on the right foot, bring the left knee in to the right and circle from right to left (count 1, 2, 3). Step forward on the left foot (count 1, 2, 3). With the weight on the left bring the right foot forward to the left foot and begin the circle with the right knee, circling from left to right (count 1, 2, 3), and then step back with the right foot (count 1, 2, 3). Bring the left foot back to the right to begin the step over again. This is the first step that covers any floor space. You will find in doing this step that you are moving the left knee in a circle and then stepping forward on the left and bringing the feet together you are circling the right knee and then stepping one step backward, and bringing the feet together before repeating the step.

We are now going to work on the box step. The box step in the rumba is exactly the same as in the fox-trot except that in the rumba you add the syncopation of the knee and heel as in all of your other rumba steps, and the movement of the hips which is the reaction from the movements of the knees. These movements are done in syncopation with the movements of the feet. However, to make it clear to beginners, we will describe how to do the box step. Begin with the feet together, weight on the right foot. Step to the left on the left foot, bring the feet together shifting the weight to the right foot, and step forward with the left foot. Count 1, 2, 3, stop, as you did in the earlier exercises. With the weight now on the left foot, make the connection between this and the next step by passing the right foot close to the left without stopping and step to the right on the right foot, bring the feet together and shift the weight to the left foot, and step back with the right foot. Count 1, 2, 3, stop. The left foot remains in front during the pause. Make the same connection described above to begin the steps to the left again. You will find that you are stepping on the four corners of an imaginary square or box which is the reason for naming it the box step.

Now that you have mastered the box step, repeat the steps that you have been doing in place, moving forward and backward to the counts 1, 2, 3, pause, taking care that you remember to do the side to side syncopation movements with the knees. For variation use the hesitation step and the box step. These two steps may also be used in turning, making it a slow gradual turn. Exactly the same movements and technique used in the running step to travel forward and backward is used when you describe a circle around your partner, traveling side by side in opposite directions or both going in the same direction.

These are all of the fundamentals of the rumba. Of course there are many variations of step but the fundamentals remain the same.

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STUDENT AND STUDIO

ALEXIS DOLINOFF *is again teaching at the* CHALIF SCHOOL *in New York*

● NEW YORK, N. Y.—Mme. Sonia Serova has announced that John Butler, popular stylist of the new idea in South American rhythms will teach in connection with her summer Normal Course for teachers. Last year Mr. Butler taught for the Chicago Association of Dancing Teachers and he has been all winter at the Serova School.

●

Miriam Marmein has made ambitious plans for a two month transcontinental summer tour and activities among the summer theatres. During August she will stay in Manomet, Massachusetts where she will be assisted in concerts by the Summer Dance Repertory Company.

●

Mme. Olga Tarassova, who has just completed her manuscript "Manual of Ballet Training" announces the opening of a teachers' summer course in ballet at her New York studio. Mme. Tarassova's pupils gave a Sunday afternoon recital at the studio on May 25, with numbers ranging widely from classical to character dancing.

●

In addition to her activities in Colorado, Hanya Holm is planning an intensive summer course for teachers and professional dancers in New York.

●

The May 27 issue of PIC magazine has devoted a three-page spread to the activities of the Blanche Evan group.

●

Loma Roberts announces her tenth annual Dalcroze summer session, to be held this year in her own studios. A scholarship is to be awarded to the most talented pupil of the school..

●

Six authorities in ballroom dancing will give a six-weeks summer Normal Course at the Franklyn Oakley School of Social Dancing. These authorities on the newest developments in various fields are Clara I. Austin, Albert Butler, Michael Herman, Fred Le Quorne, Oscar Duryea and Franklyn Oakley.

●

Vincenzo Celli will teach this summer at his studio and among his brilliant pupils are ballet luminaries like Leonide Massine, Mia Slavenska, Roland Guerard, etc.

●

The Bronx Winter Garden on June 28 will feature a grand ball and performance starring La Rue and Yolanda. The company will feature as its soloists the misses Marie Giuc and Betty Beenk. The high spot of the evening will be a presentation of the Pavlova Gavotte by little Miss Herminie Kern, in a costume which is a replica of the one worn by Pavlova.

● NEW YORK, N. Y.—Alexis Dolinoff, who had been teaching in Chicago for eight months at the Merriel Abbott School, recently resigned from its faculty and has returned to New York to teach at the Chalif School. During his stay in Chicago, he was a staff writer for the American Dancer. Between schools, Mr. Dolinoff has been vacationing at the home of Laurent Novikoff in New Buffalo, on Lake Michigan. He plans to give several concerts in New York and its vicinity next season and for this purpose shall organize a small group of dancers. There are tentative plans to engage Mr. Dolinoff to produce a revue which will feature colorful South American themes.

● CHICAGO, Ill.—Patricia Barker, Phenomal young dancer, trained in the Gladys Hight School, has signed with M. G. M. and her first picture, *Blossoms in the Dust,* with Greer Garson, will be released in June. Hollywood thinks the child is terrific and she has only two years of training behind her. Her mother, Gloria Lee, most interesting to note, was also a dancer and a pupil of Gladys Hight.

VIRGINIA SELF, *of Dallas, Texas, is guest teacher this summer for* ERNEST BELCHER *in Hollywood*

● MIAMI, Fla.—Phyllis Kapp of this city will give an unusual summer dance course to teachers.

●

The twelfth annual recital of the Mae Rose Follies was held May 16 at the Temple Theatre in Miami, and in spite of the infantile paralysis scare, played to a capacity audience. On June 9 the Mae Rose corp de ballet presented a colorful spectacle for the Royal Poinciana Festival at Bayfront Park. Little eight-year old Bonnie La Vonne, a pupil of Miss Rose, is appearing in *Aloma of the South Seas* with Dorothy Lamour and Jon Hall.

● SYRACUSE, N. Y.—In conjunction with a performance of *Cavalleria Rusticana* by the Syracuse Opera Association at Lincoln Auditorium a ballet called *Echoes of Old Vienna* was presented by the Syracuse Dance Art Association, which has given three concerts in the first year of its organization. At its first concert, the organization sponsored a distinguished guest-artist, Miss Ruth St. Denis.

● IRONWOOD, Mich.—Somewhat off the beaten track of the usual traveling ballet companies, the city of Ironwood was grateful for the long-awaited performance of Mlle. Lola Moscveskova's production *Le Lac Enchante,* which was presented at the Ironwood Theatre on April 16. Besides Mlle. Moscveskova, there appeared as guest-artist Mr. Lucius Kosinski, a member of the Pallette Ballet of Berenice Holmes, and an imposing cast of one hundred. The production was a most polished one and was received with cheers.

● ALBANY, N. Y.—At its annual Spring ballet concert, the Albany Ballet under the direction of Gertrude Hallenbeck presented a varied and interesting program of compositions by Margery Fielding, Swoboda and Muriel Stuart, as well as by Miss Hallenbeck, and all were enthusiastically received by the audience at the Albany Academy.

● HYDE PARK, Mass.—On June 7 the annual recital of the LillaFrances Viles School, entitled *Petit Carnival* was given by its pupils. A contest is held annually in conjunction with the sale of recital tickets and three valuable prizes were given. On May 15 the Hyde Park children under Miss Viles appeared in a Maypole dance at the Dix St. Dorchester Christ Church dancing party.

● BOSTON, Mass.—The dates of the Boston convention of the Boston Dancing Teachers Association has been set for September 9-12 at the Bradford Hotel. There will be an array of outstanding dance educators, as follows: Anton Dolin, Walter Camryn, Charles Weidman, Johnnie Mattison, De Revuelta, Judith and Jacques, Les Soeurs Gillooly and others. The annual banquet will be held September 11.

● WESTPORT, Conn.—A performance of Prokofieff's *Peter and the Wolf* and a divertissement by a group of children from the New York studio of Rosetta O'Neill was given at the Children's Theatre on May 23 at Nash's Barn, in Westport.

●COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.—Colorado College presents Hanya Holm and six members of her company in a summer session instruction and dance production.

● SOUTH BEND, Ind.—A ballet based on the Tschaikowsky *Nutcracker Suite* was presented May 3 in the auditorium of the Central Senior High School by the Civic Mothersingers of South Bend. The ballet was staged by Maxene Mollenhour with her two

assistants, Gertrude Thibideau and Kathleen Casey, dancing the roles of the *Candy Fairy* and the *Arab girl*, respectively. Miss Mollenhour's own show Fantasies of 1941 was presented June 6 at the same auditorium.

● TAMPA, Fla.—Josef Castle presented five Thursday evenings of the Dance Theatre at the American-Hellenic Auditorium through the month of May. The programmes were varied and ambitious and the list of the city's patrons and patronesses were impressive.

●

CALIFORNIA

The Southern California Association of Dancing Teachers are planning a lavish Convention to be held at the Hotel Knickerbocker in Hollywood, from August 17 to 20. A faculty known for their experience will include such artists as Thomas Sheehy, exponent of Ballet and Rumba; Ernest E. Ryan, Jules Swart, Al Lauraine, Virginia Gollotz in all branches of Ballroom dancing; Ray J. Leslie in the tap dancing field and Corinne Leslie who will present a group of her unusual children's dances. The old saying that business and pleasure cannot be combined has been defied, for along with an unexcelled faculty, many events have been organized for the teachers attending, which will be entertaining as well as educational: 1. A trip and luncheon to one of the major Motion Picture Studios; 2. A concert at the world famous Hollywood Bowl; 3. A dinner at Earl Carrol's famous theatre restaurant.

●

Ernest Belcher reports prospects of a busy summer season judging by the volume of mail from all parts of the country. Mr. Belcher is featuring his now famous eight grade system for teaching ballet. Louis Da Pron, of the Tap department, is now at work as dance director on his fourth major picture production. Mr. Belcher's combined faculty are experts in some of the most popular dance forms in the country.

●

According to reports, Hollywood Bowl is planning only two dance programmes this coming season.

●

Dorothy Jarnac and Wana Williams have gone to Hawaii where they may stay for a year if plans they now have mature. Miss Jarnac's father is attached to the army post there.

GINGER LAYNE, *of the* SWOBODA-YURIEVA SCHOOL, *appearing at the Chez Maurice in Montreal*

Bob Alton is making a very good impression on west coast dancers for his direction of the dances for the new Fred Astaire picture.

●

There is a movement on foot in Los Angeles to form a large folk festival committee to further this type of dancing, and featuring especially Pan-American festivals.

●

The WPA Symphony orchestra is making plans for their summer concert series, in conjunction with a series of dance concerts.

Left: PATRICIA BARKER *of the* GLADYS HIGHT SCHOOL, *Chicago, will appear in M-G-M's Blossoms in the Dust with Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon*

HONOR ROLL

Top left: Arlene Reed, featured dancer at the benefit tea for the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, is a pupil of the KOLP SCHOOL OF DANCING, *Richmond, Indiana. Center: Baby Sandra Mozer, Dedham, Mass., was one of the youngest stars of the 5th edition of Wee Bits. The annual recital of the* LILLAFRANCES VILES SCHOOL OF DANCING, *Hyde Park, Mass. Left: Marilyn Dysart, of the* IRMA HART CARRIER SCHOOL, *Havana, Cuba, as the Pearl in Miss Carrier's Under Water Ballet. Bottom left: Sonia Suzanne Slaby, talented student and daughter of* PETROFF SLABY, *Milwaukee, Wisc. Bottom right: Joan L. Maiorielli and John Geraci, the King and Queen of Dance in Fashions of 1941 as presented by the* LOU-ELLEN SCHOOL OF DANCING, *Philadelphia, Penna.*

NEW DANCE RECORDS

selected by WILLARD HALL

In Decca's Album 211 there are ten Conga recordings which are hard to beat. Pancho especially offers a novelty in the form of a one-step played with a Conga lift-beat. Ask your dealer to play Hindustan and Tiger Rag, both on record No. 3620, and I'm Just Wild About Harry, on record No. 3677. Xavier Cugat's new release through Columbia, album C54 includes eight recordings of rumba, son and bolero, all of which are superlative.

COLUMBIA, DECCA AND OKEH
DANCE RECORDS
MAY—1941

* This asterisk means that both sides of the record are good for dancing and are listed below.

Speed in Measures	Record and Title	Orchestra
	FOX TROTS	
24	*Col 36083, I Understand	Raymond Scott
25	*Decca 3738, My Mom	Woody Herman
25	*Col 36083, The Things I Love	Raymond Scott
27	*Decca 3738, Intermezzo	Woody Herman
27	*OK 6178, In Apple Blossom Time	Frankie Masters
27	*OK 6166, Loaf'in on A Lazy Day	Dick Jurgens
28	Col 36103, In the Hush of the Night	Raymond Scott
28	*OK 6156, Nice Dreamin' Baby	Tommy Tucker
28	*OK 6177, Time and Time Again	Tommy Tucker
29	*OK 6188, I Found a Million Dollar Baby	Tommy Tucker
30	*Col 36080, I'll Love You in My Dreams	Horace Heidt
30	*OK 6156, Number Ten Lullaby Lane	Tommy Tucker
32	*Col 36102, Do I Worry	Orrin Tucker & Bonnie Baker
32	*Col 36138, The Way You Look at Me	Horace Heidt
32	*Col 36084, But Not For Me	Teddy Wilson
33	*Col 36102, I Went Out of My Way	Orrin Tucker
33	*Col 36075, With A Twist of the Wrist	Kay Kyser
35	*Decca 18119, Barrelhouse	Jess Stacy
35	*OK 6166, Nighty-Night	Dick Jurgens
36	*Decca 3721, Au Reet	Jimmy Dorsey
36	*Col 36075, Play, Play Tina	Kay Kyser
38	*OK 6177, Minnie From Trinidad	Tommy Tucker
39	*Decca 3724, By Heck	Jan Savit
39	*Decca 3721, Man, Thats Groovy	Jimmy Dorsey
40	*Col 36100, Toy Piano Minuet	Horace Heidt
42	*Col 36100, Toy Piano Jump	Horace Heidt
42	*OK 6176, In the Hush of the Night	Frankie Masters
42	Col 36090, Let's Get Away From It All	Raymond Scott
42	*Col 36093, You Can Depend on Me	Orrin Tucker & Bonnie Baker
44	*Decca 18117, You Took Advantage of Me	Bunny Berigan
44	*Col 36138, The Hut—Sut Song	Horace Heidt
44	*OK 6165, Maria Elena	Gene Krupa
46	OK 6160, My Mind's On You	Tiny Hill
46	*Decca 3724, Jolly Peter	Jan Savit
46	Col 36137, Say When	Kay Kyser
46	Decca 18115, Jazz Me Blues	Gene Krupa
48	Decca 18116, I'm Coming Virginia	Bunny Berigan
48	*Col 36084, Oh, Lady Be Good	Teddy Wilson
48	*Col 36093, Calling All Hearts	Orrin Tucker
50	*OK 6182, Bedelia	Jan Garber
50	*OK 6188, Blues	Tommy Tucker
56	*Decca 18118, Tempo Di Jump	Pete Brown
56	*Decca 18118, Ocean Motion	Pete Brown
56	*Col 36135, Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater	Herbie Kay
58	*Decca 18117, Chicken and Waffles	Bunny Berigan

Speed in Measures	Record and Title	Orchestra
	ONE STEP	
66	*Decca 3742, Aurora	Pancho
	WALTZ	
36	*Col 36131, I Can't Remember	Wayne King
38	*OK 6182, Linger Just A Little Longer	Jan Garber
38	*Col 36131, Grainnina Mia	Wayne King
42	*Col 36135, Violets and Friends	Herbie Kay
	POLKA	
48	*Col 36080, Clarinet Polka	Horace Heidt
60	*Col 12211F, Az, Az, Az	Golden Goose Orchestra
60	*Col 12211F, Good Morning	Jerry Mazanec
66	*Col 12212F, Marjanka's Thousand Heroes	Ed Krolikowski
69	Col 12210F, Anna Polka	Ed Krolikowski
	RUMBA	
33	*Col 36129, Antillana	Lecuona Cuban Boys
33	*OK 6165, A Rendezvous in Rio	Gene Krupa
33	*Col 36139, Aurora	Xavier Cugat
33	*Col 6106X, Tormento (Torment)	Manuel S. Acuna with Adelina Garcia
35	*Col 6106X, Tordecita (A Lovely Afternoon)	Manuel S. Acuna
36	*Col 36097, Acercate Mas	Xavier Cugat
38	*Col 36097, Incertidumbre	Xavier Cugat
40	*Col 36098, Negra Leono	Xavier Cugat
40	*Col 36098, La Cumparsa	Xavier Cugat
44	*Decca 3743, Green Eyes	Pancho
50	*Col 36129, International Rumba	Lecuona Cuban Boys
50	*Col 36139, Minnie From Trinidad	Xavier Cugat
60	*Col 36091, La Cucaracha	Xavier Cugat
60	*Col 36091, Tony's Wife	Xavier Cugat
63	*Decca 3743, Blem, Blem, Blem	Pancho
63	*Col 36096, Anna Boroco Tinde	Xavier Cugat
36	*Col 36096, Yo Ta Namora	Xavier Cugat
66	*Col 36095, Cachita	Xavier Cugat
44	*Col 36095, Duerme	Xavier Cugat
	CONGA	
66	*Decca 3742, I Came, I Saw, I Conga'd	Pancho
66	*Decca 3634, Goin' Conga	Sacasas Royal Havana Orchestra
66	*Decca 3634, Dinah	Sacasas Royal Havana Orchestra
69	*Decca 3677, One—Two—Three—Kick	Ruby Newman
69	*Decca 3352, Americonga	Don Arres
69	*Decca 3326, Adios, Panama	Henry King
69	*Decca 3326, Viene La Conga	Henry King
69	*Decca 3620, Hindustan	Pancho
69	*Decca 3620, Tiger Rag	Pancho
69	*Decca 3677, I'm Just Wild About Harry	Pancho
72	*Decca 3352, That Happy Conga (Allegre Conga)	Don Arres

COMING OF THE NEW ICE AGE

(*Continued from page* 11)

Not that baton-twirling is her forte. Not at all. It was a grimly determined little girl of five, years ago in California, who took it upon herself to build an edifice of tables and chairs one upon another, and dance up and down upon them despite the knocks and falls. "It can't be done!" she firmly declared as she came tumbling down for the last time before her mother caught her at this dangerous sport and decided to bend her troublesome energies to dancing. To dancing school she therefore went without further ado.

Between five and eighteen a great many dancing lessons certainly have passed under the bridge, with startling results. Betty is not a ballerina or an artiste as the term is understood by the finicky critical brotherhood, but she is a thrilling performer to watch. Like every really clever performer she is a thinking as well as a feeling entity. She reasons her way in and out of a performance. She definitely belongs to that school of thought which recognizes that ice-dancing is dependent for its utmost in theatrical values upon a classical ballet foundation. In a word, it is the reasonable belief and knowledge that line in a skater is as important as in a dancer; that these lines to be any use to a skater must follow the pattern of ballet training; that some lines are a delight to the eye and others a stench in the nostrils. The difference between this knowledge and the lack of it makes the difference between a Sonja Henie and the poor wretch who plunges into *arabesques* on the ice without any previous dancing and who thinks two-sessions on ice-skates are sufficient to prepare him for any kind of posturing.

It is interesting to note that Betty was in stock at the Warner Brothers Studio during her school years and her first break came when during the filming of *Varsity Show,* which featured Fred Waring, he offered her a two year contract to appear with his band as soloist, as a result of her work in that picture. She accepted. Coincidentally with this event, she was made an honorary member of the American Legion Drum and Bugle Corp and inducted, as a signal honor, into the all-male American Legion Drum Majors organization. In 1940 she was acclaimed not only as the pioneer but the finest Drum Majorette in the world. As a result of her drum majoretting at Rose Bowl games, she was given a four-year scholarship to the University of Southern California. This scholarship she seriously intends to make use of, if and when there is a hiatus between shows. She is keenly interested in the further study of art and music.

Two years ago Betty had never been on skates. Today she is the newest phenomenon of the skating world. Charles Hain, the personable lad who partners her in their adagio in the show, is responsible for her conversion to the ice. As he was, and is her only teacher, she was able to make enormous progress without the pitfalls and blunders to which so many students fall heir. Naturally one's instinct for news-mongering immediately sets one wondering if there is a romance here. Unfortunately we had no opportunity of tracking down the truth, but the indications on the surface all point to it. Despite the fact that she had a young lifetime of dancing behind her and an interested teacher to guide her on skates, she found the going tough. You can believe us, it took some powerful concentration to turn a turned-out, straight-kneed dancer into a skater, as any ballet dancer who has had the bad luck to shove out on a rink, knows painfully well. The turned-out foot is treacherous and brings you to rue; the knees, secondly, must bend, or else! You must unlearn years of patient application to the technique of dancing from the hips down, to learn how to handle your feet in skates and retain the hard-earned knowledge of the use of the upper body. Betty's work on skates is a tribute to her will.

And wait till you hear what happened to us when we visited her dressing-room backstage. Being a dressing room at the Center Theatre, it is one of the more habitable places we have come across in all these weary years of seeing the inside and outside of the world's shabbiest and most draught-ridden theatres. This room is as snug and pretty as you please and is shared by its part-owner, Fraulein Hedi Stenuf. We were invited to look at the Atkinson collection of batons which we were assured can't be out-collected anywhere in the world. We can tell you right here and now, we aren't strong enough to bear up under a larger one. Boxes, large and small, house these streamlined-glittering treasures. Over in a corner there stands an oblong box as tall as a man. This was the *piece de resistance*. Betty opened this and with obvious pride brought forth a baton five feet high and weighing almost as much as she did, at the sight of which we fainted noisily away. Yes, you can believe us, she certainly can handle this five-foot horror. We think its a lamp post. It must be a lamp post. It's as tall as a lamp post and has a bright light in its head. Betty states it would be no trouble at all for her to twirl a lamp post. So there. We see her going down the years spread-eagling on the ice while twirling, golf sticks, trees, lamp posts, totem-poles, the Empire State build—no! Not that! This is madness. Forgive us, while we rush out to cool our fevered brow in some ice.

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THE DAYS OF A CHOREOGRAPHER'S YEARS

(*Continued from page* 13)

In the year 1937 he presented his crowning achievement as a choreographer. The night *Dark Elegies* made its first appearance in London was for him the happiest of his life. Such a confession from him is indicative of the true artist-craftsman. No personal happiness could come close to it. In England, *Dark Elegies* was danced to the hilt, as it never has been here. He has never been able to conceal his disappointment that America did not take to it as England did. *Dark Elegies* is a sequence of images of the utmost simplicity and subtlety based upon the *Kindertoten Lieder* of Gustav Mahler, which freely translated reads: *Songs for the Death of Children.* What exactly happens in this intellectualized drama of the most universal sorrow in the world? There is no sign of knock-down and drag-out beats, jumps and turns. The dancers in this ballet, as in *Jardin Aux Lilas* which followed it, effectively make use of stasis forms which is one of Tudor's most powerful instruments as a choreographer. Those moments when nothing happens and the actors in the drama freeze into suggestive inaction are among the most powerful moments ever seen on a stage. This use of stasis can be compared only to the use a great composer makes of dead silence in the middle of a symphony or concerto. Of course, the spectator who comes to a performance to see the dancers surge up and down with nary a breath between *rèlevе* is apt to be perplexed by the Tudor ballets and wail that nothing is happening in them. Nothing is, of course, outside of the most delicate and beautiful grouping in modern choreography; nothing but the most touching, the most human drama ever seen in ballet since the finest works of Fokine.

The scenario of *Jardin Aux Lilas* which followed *Dark Elegies* is hardly competent to describe what takes place on the stage. A young girl is about to be married to a man whom she does not love. She says goodbye to her lover and her friends and goes. *Jardin Aux Lilas* is in direct line a successor to *Giselle, Sylphides* and the symphonic ballets of Massine. *Jardin* suggests even to an out and out novice its qualities of wistfulness over mocking tragedy. Nobody need ever have seen a ballet, or read the scenario of this one to look at it and misunderstand it. Its value is clear to balletomane, critic and layman alike. While it was only moderately successful in England, here in America it set the hills aringing with the hosannas it provoked. Tudor appeared in it himself, miming the role of the bridegroom.

Since these two gigantic successes he has produced two works which are more or less sparkling depending on your critical opinion. *Gala Performance,* the first, is a farce on the meeting of three great ballerinas at a command performance in Paris in the late 19th century, with its attendant farcical situations. Everyone from dancer to truck-driver found it a delicious comedy of ballet manners and probably enjoyed the only real laugh anyone has ever been able to extract from ballet. The second, *Goya Pastoral,* was a brightly mimed ballet to the music of Granados. In the Spanish idiom, Tudor is unhappily a stranger, but despite it produced a composition with spasmodically interesting moments. His was the second production of this ballet, the first being the one presented in the Ballet Theatre's first season of 1940 by Jose Fernandez. Of course, for both Tudor and Fernandez, merely wrestling with the clumsy score of Granados was unexampled courage.

The newest Tudor ballet, called *Time Table,* produced for tthe American Ballet Caravan's South American tour has yet to be put publicly on view. It will probably be the winter of 1941 before it is shown to the New York public and in the meantime a new production is quite likely to show its face.

In writing of Antony Tudor and his work, no one must neglect one phase of his life which while it throws no light on his evolution as a choreographer, is of considerable interest to the curious.

Between 1932 and 1939 when he came to America, Tudor had dabbled sporadically in films and musicals with more or less unhappy results. For Gina Malo he arranged a dance called *In a Monastery Garden* for a film. This episode he dismisses with the declaration: "It was tripe!" Another event which he would dearly love to turn his back on and forget forever was a *Chinese Temple Dance* in a musical starring Dorothy Dixon and Ivor Novello. Imagine the horror of arranging dances for people who aren't dancers but who must be made to look as if they could dance. Drop the curtain on that.

A more pleasurable experience was the occasion of the joint appearance of Vivian Leigh with Hugh Laing in the Max Beerbohm play, *The Happy Hypocrite.* For this he created a delicate 18th century divertissement. He claims to have been much impressed with Miss Leigh's intelligence. He found her malleable and receptive. Equally pleasurable was his experience with Madeleine Carroll in a play called, *The Toy Cart.* He arranged a most amusing oriental dance for her. Whether she could dance or not, he is in no position to know as her beauty knocked him for such a loop that for a long time he went about seeing nothing but Madeleine Carroll in spots before his eyes.

In addition to these excursions into popular fields, he also directed the very first television ballets in 1937 with Margot Fonteyn and others.

Antony Tudor is unashamedly frank in admitting that he came to America in quest of money. However, he leaves unsaid what one suspects is the truth: that he felt the necessity of working at his craft somewhere away from the distressing nearness of war and that this weighed much more heavily with him than the desire for money.

Of American dancers he says that he was bowled over by their technical abilities but finds their outlook upon art limited to a painful degree. Americans, he says, do not cultivate their parts with the feeling of the Continental or with the painstakingness of the English. Their interests are regretfully scattered among non-consequential affairs. Not that he believes in a cloistered life for the ballet dancer. On the contrary, he should have daily contact with the world outside and yet husband his concentrative powers to the end for which he has spent a lifetime in studying ballet: to the end of greater and more complete characterization. In dancers he admires, first: quality of movement; second: a long slender neck; third: beauty. Accept his dictums you must. There is an odor of sanity in them. The greatest technical feats ever imagined are no compensation for a homely face or a short, squat body, or an overly tall meagre one. Faces alone can mar the beauty of a ballet. You can't place a flat mongoloid face into *Jardin,* for instance, without offending the critical eye. This matter of appearance counts heavily with him. His groups are generally intimate and their feeling for characterization must be strongly defined

Tudor looks upon himself as a priest of the Fokine cult, its most loyal priest. For him Fokine is the beginning and the end in all that is good in ballet today. Fokine did more than revolt against the rigid forms of pre-twentieth century ballet. He evolved a dance based upon mime and attended by its handmaidens music and painting which has merely been the rock upon which he, Tudor, and Massine, and Balanchine have built. Without that rock he feels ballet may have faced gradual extinction. Styles in choreography change from year to year but basically they draw their inspiration from the Fokine-inspired revolution in ballet. He doesn't in the least mind the accusation of plagiarizing from Fokine. Not literal plagiarization, of course. He cocks an eye and reminds you that no less than Brahms was accused of stealing themes from Beethoven and the classic response of Brahms to this was: So What! As both men stole nothing from the art they served but enriched it, so Fokine and Tudor can both borrow from where they please without harm to the ends they serve.

It is now nearly two years since the advent of Antony Tudor to America and behind him are three rich seasons of consummated work. This summer in the ballet workshop at Jacob's Pillow where Dolin and Markova have a summer camp, he will carry on as before. His most ambitious plans for the future revolve about the spectacle he would like to do on the Sibelius *En Saga.* The subject of the Finnish people and their culture is perhaps the one thing in the world which is certain to make him quiver with passion. He can talk, and does, for two hours about their Magyar origins, their melancholy country, the difficulty of man earning his bread from the tilling of the soil in the far North, and the similarity between their music and that of the Russians. Apropos of this project, a spectacle drama on the Finns, he went to Finland in 1936 to speak, if he could, with Sibelius. He could, and did. Sibelius was happy to see him, chatted gaily with him for hours, and offered him the hospitality of his home, of all Finland, in fact. This interview with Sibelius remains one of the shining spots in his life. He has never since quite abandoned this project. Perhaps *En Saga* is the next Tudor Ballet.

Now and then you can spy him walking on 57th Street between studio and home, absorbed in what has absorbed most of his waking hours since he was sixteen years old. That is a long time for a single absorption. His scholarly appearance rouses no interest in the passerby; he lacks mannerism or glamour. He is a picture of a matter-of-fact man walking down the street minding his own business: the business of choreography.

YOUR AGE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT

(*Continued from page* 16)

After becoming a star in her own right (she was the first to do a shoulder stand on a galloping horse) Josephine de Mott married and retired. With her husband she spent a couple of years in Alaska during the gold rush days, living for months on end in frozen wastes far from any human contact other than her husband and his partner. During that time she lived many real life dramas which the movies would probably discard as too improbable, but which she incorporated into a series of articles she wrote for McCall's Magazine (1928) under the title "A Woman's Story of the Gold Rush."

Later, while her husband was state representative for his district, she lived a very social life and seemed to have put all thoughts of her profession away from her. There was a period there of almost twenty-five years—a span so long that most women would have thought to bridge the gap and grasp again the earlier successes would have been impossible. But not Josephine de Mott Robinson! Diagnosing her restlessness as the need for her former life, she began limbering and stretching exercises with a chair for a *barre* and nerves screaming with anxiety lest the servants see and scoff at her. It was a long, uphill pull, but finally she knew that she again had her body under control. Then she turned to riding, daring to attempt again the feats which had once made her famous. When she knew she was ready she went to Barnum and Bailey—and they engaged her immediately. And *that* must have been at least fifteen years ago!

Today, Mrs. Robinson exercises just as assiduously as any ballerina. She casually does fifty stretches for each part of her body to every thirty that her proteges are able to do. "I would rather practice than anything else," she remarked, "but don't think I'm not human. There are times when I say to myself 'one day won't matter, I'll just skip it' and then that frightens me. I wouldn't think of not washing my face some day, why should I be less careful of the rest of my body?"

The average girl, today, does not know where her feet are on the floor, she asserts. And this gives her cause for great concern. "I really think ballet is an essential for all people and all things," she says, "and debutantes certainly need it to make their feet pretty!"

As if a daily schedule of teaching posture, exercise, vitality and a generally better understanding of walking is not enough for one person, Mrs. Robinson is now studying acrobatic with Sam Abdullah at the Jack Stanly school. "It is all because a reporter from Pic, after making pictures of me one day wanted to know if I didn't have any tricks. I have never studied acrobatic and decided I would begin. However, when I mentioned it to a doctor friend he tried so tactfully to discourage 'a woman of my age' that it made me mad. There is that age question again! So I asked Sammy (Abdullah) if he would take me as a pupil—and here I am!"

"Remember this," she warned as we parted, "your body will be with you all your life." Isn't that reason enough to take care of it?

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FLIGHTS BEYOND THE HORIZON

(*Continued from page* 15)

may be historical, but the tempo of the movement is of the present. Movement has to be of to-day, in order to be understood by us now. In years to come, movement will change as it has changed in the last twenty-five years—even in the last three years.

Martha Graham and all great dancers, like eminent poets, see this world and its people in a tremendous range of qualities and moods, from vibrant depths to imagination's zenith. They feel a strong need to tell the world about the vast beauties and duties available to all, in proportion to each individual's sensibilities.

But at the same time, they are realists in the knowledge that all of this cannot be accomplished in self-expressional orgies. It can only be projected with the cold labor of technical skill and emotional restraint.

To speak of Martha Graham's works, will hint at the immensity of her creative genius and delicate sensitivity toward her environment and other influences upon her life.

Martha Graham was deeply affected by the poems and life of Emily Dickinson. For months she read and reread the words and thoughts and responded to the metres and rhymes of the poetess. When she understood the essentials of the emotional qualities of this also sensitive, imaginative and intelligent woman, she wanted the dance-world to feel these qualities through the medium of the dance.

After a year of research, planning and creating, her work resulted in a comprehensive and emotionally moving theatre piece—*Letter To The World,* which Martha Graham added to her successes this year.

Poetry was Emily Dickinson's *letter to the world.* Her words breathed New England life—her reactions to her environment. It exuded the tragedy of the loss of her lover and the consequent need for happiness to be found in the intensity of work.

Martha Graham understood the imaginative world of Emily Dickinson and built a legendary rather than a factual theatre piece upon it.

The real Emily Dickinson was not portrayed by any one character, but each contained the essentials of some one aspect of her.

The *One Who Dances* (Martha Graham danced this part), the *One Who Speaks,* also *The Children, The Fairy Queen* and *The Young Girl* were extensions of her own self from childhood to maturity. *The Ancestress,* which symbolized her fear of death, was also the concrete expression of the puritan background. *March* and other men were extensions of Emily Dickinson's gesture toward happiness, toward the lover she lost.

The combination of the poetry quoted by the *One Who Speaks* and the dance movements of the rest of the characters gave an impact that left one deeply stirred and well acquainted with Emily Dickinson.

Another composition—*Every Soul Is a Circus* was suggested by a line from a poem by Vachel Lindsey. The process was not in any way similar to that of *Letter To The World.*

The words:

"Every soul is a Circus
Every mind is a tent
Every heart is a sawdust ring
Where the circling race is spent"

suggested to Martha Graham a satirical idea woven around a silly woman who emotes before an imaginary spectator with antics which were so ineffectual as to be amusing and revealing of human weaknesses.

This silly woman lived a life of confusion, vacillating between emotional responses toward the whip-hand of a strong character (the husband?) who was represented in the form of a ring-master of the circus, and the spectacular antics of a pretty acrobat (the other man in a triangle?).

It took a year to plan and complete the action of this work. One has only to see it to recognize it as a piece of satirical perfection with lasting quality.

Removing herself from the influence of anything but childhood memories of her life in New Mexico, Martha Graham composed *El Penitente.*

El Penitente had all the color of New Mexico and it had the religious feeling of the Penitentes. But naturally it could not have any of the actual religious rites, since no one ever sees them.

Martha Graham knew these people, through having lived among them and knew that they believed in salvation through penance—even flagellation.

With these essentials she developed a Mystery Play with three characters: *The Penitent,* the *Christ Figure* and the *Mary Figure* which was presented in three aspects: the *Virgin, Magdalen* and *Mother.*

The drama ended with a Festival Dance which had no ritualistic content and is more likely a quality of New Mexico, as Martha Graham remembered it, than a part of the life of the Penitentes.

Martha Graham and every fine artist contributes something to humanity. It remains with us to find the full value of those contributions. Persons of genius see much farther beyond the horizon than we do. From them we can learn what they see. And when we have learned all they know, we must go on and search farther beyond the horizons ourselves.

Life cannot hold out a mirage. Eternity challenges us to seek new goals. Living stimulates the *endeavoring again.*

"Damn" said the Duchess as she cut the Bishop's throat

And that's just one of the 10,000,000 ways to begin a short story.

For some time AMERICAN DANCER readers have been telling us that they would like to read a monthly bit of fiction peopled with dancers, men and women, boys and girls who live and move in their own world.

Believing that the best place to get this material is at its source, from those who know life on the stage and in the dance school at first hand, we hereby invite one and all to pick one of the other 9,999,999 beginnings, write the story, and send it in to us.

In order to create incentive and lend interest, the AMERICAN DANCER will henceforward conduct a

MONTHLY CONTEST for the best short story

of less than 1,000 words submitted each month before we go to press.

Stories must be between 800 and 1,000 words and must be about dancers and dancing, wherever they may be found. Devil-dancing in Tibet, a little hoofer in the tank burlesque circuit, the world famous ballerina, or the dressing room feuds of a Broadway Musical . . . all are good subjects.

Send all contributions to: Story Editor, THE AMERICAN DANCER, 250 West 57th Street, New York City. All submissions must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope when return of the manuscript, if rejected, is desired. Manuscripts which are selected cannot be returned.

For every story the Editors will award, as a monthly prize, $5.00 in cash and a five year subscription to the AMERICAN DANCER MAGAZINE.

So . . . "Damn", said the Ballet Mistress as she raised the bloody knife . . . Now, you take over there, and good luck!

LULLY, UNIFIER OF BALLET

(*Continued from page* 17)

abled Beauchamps to introduce the elements of verticality and elevation as well as horizontal motions in the ballet. The court dances of the time had been mostly *basse danses* or *terre a terre,* that is feet barely leaving the ground, unless there was a whole dance made of grotesque jumps. Beauchamps introduced graceful elevation and laid the foundation for the five basic positions as well. To see Beauchamps' dances today would probably be uninteresting, but he undeniably made a great advance in his day by establishing the technique on which all succeeding dancers have relied. He could not have done it without the help of Lully because before Lully, Beauchamps never had a chance to show his wares.

In addition to unifying the ballet form, Lully also perfected the performers. "The dancers were not drunk six nights a week, and the musicians played with incredible precision," a contemporary has told us. Lully enforced discipline and untiringly rehearsed the artists daily for several weeks before the performance. As a result his fame spread all over Europe and he was acknowledged as the greatest composer of his day. Berlioz is the only other French musician to have approached Lully's fame. Indeed Lully was not the revolutionist that Berlioz was, but he was the man for the job in the seventeenth century. (*Continued on next page*)

See you at the Convention!

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VIA THE GRAPE VINE

(*Continued from page 22*)

. . . We hear Piscator is to do a ballet at the School of Social Research, his wife directing . . . Margaret Severn, who underwent an operation recently, is now convalescing. She has plans for a new group since severing ties with the Friendship House . . . At the reception for Valeska Gert, at the Kamin Bookshop, she demanded a "New Order" for the dance and performed in a black tunic in interesting, if grotesque, fashion . . . Hasoutra, the oriental dancer, after ten years abroad, is back in America, working as a receptionist in a museum! . . . Slavenska's movie offer is still open and Slavenska is still in New York . . . The army, the navy and the marines will be in a frenzy to hear that the girl friend will be admitted free (one to a man) at Monte Proser's Madison Square dance carnival. Will there be enough room, or will they have to tear down a few hundred houses to accommodate the overflow?. . . .

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LULLY, UNIFIER OF BALLET

(*Continued from page 30*)

In the seventeenth century all music was danceable, but by the ninteteenth century the musician had isolated himself from the dancer with what he called pure music. This led to a stagnation in dance forms and ultimately in music forms. The symphonic poem invented a century ago is the last new form. Recently twentieth century musicians like Stravinsky and Milhaud and dancers and Choreographers like Fokine and Massine have been leading us back to that fusion of theatrical acts which was achieved in the baroque age by Lully, who replaced the polyphonic music of the renaissance with new ideas of form—forms which were good for music and dance. Today we need another set of forms which will be appropriate for music and the dance. By paying more attention to danceability of the music and unity we can enrich dancing and music together, thus achieving in our own day as great a revolution in art as Lully and Beauchamps made in theirs. It is important to remember that advance is not made by adding and superadding frills to an old machine, but rather by starting fresh with a new structure, incorporating to be sure the basic improvements of the last, but not repeating its faults. That is how Lully and Beauchamps worked, that is how would-be revolutionists should, work today.

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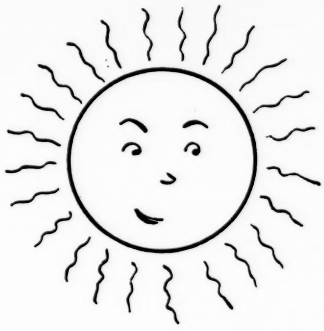

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LIVING TRADITIONS OF THE HINDU DANCE

(*Continued from page* 14)

It should not be assumed by the reader that the twenty-four *Mudras* or hand symbols are fixed or static hand poses. If that were so, the lovely fluidity and expressive power of the Indian dance would be impossible. The Mudras are merely code symbols, and in their pure form were used in rituals. In the gesture sequences of the dance, the transition movements from one Mudra, to another by one or both hands, are as important as the gestures themselves.

The Eye and Emotion

Gesture is the soul of the Indian dance, and the eye is the index to the dominant mood, while the foot sets the rhythm. Coordinated action between these three is the basis of Indian dance technique.

The eight fundamental movements of the eye are often called *Nritta Dristis* or "Dance of the eyes." The eyes have specific movements and expressions that are as important to the exposition of dance-mood as gestures themselves.

There are also nine principal movements of the head, and four rhythmic movements of the neck defined and practised in the Hindu dance.

The Indian danseuse is a perfect mistress of moods. Her superb control of eyes, lips, head, neck, waist, hips, thighs, wrists and fingers gives her a dramatic technique more direct and vivid in its appeal to the imagination and sentiments than spoken language. It is more than mere dancing! It is the rhythmic narrative of moods and passions, human and divine, rendered in perfectly harmonized movements and gestures.

Living Traditions of Classical Dance

If modern civilization has dimmed the glory of the art of dancing in India, time has failed to extinguish its codes and traditions, handed down for thousands of years.

South India remains the chief repository of ancient ritual dances, and dance drama; the art having survived the ravages of invaders in the North, by taking refuge in South India.

Votaries of the Temple

The Invocation dances of the Devadasis, or dance-devotees of the South Indian Temples, are really a votive offering to the presiding deity of the temple "spelled out in the exquisite grace and rhythm of a rich vocabulary of gestures" and postures. The traditions of the art are very ancient and the religious custom of dedicating girls to the service of temples in India from early childhood has perpetuated a beautiful art until the present day, though the temple dance service has been discontinued.

Kathakali Mime Drama

The perfected art of mime and the more virile types of dramatic *Tandava* dance, are still to be found in Malabar, the western portion of South India extending to the west coast. *Kathakali,* which is derived from *Katha* (story) and *Kali* (play), employs an elaborate classical gesture language in its sacred dramas, as well as ancient forms of dance and rituals found nowhere else in India today. Its exponents are now chiefly men, and boys who take feminine roles, since the participation of women has been discontinued, because of modern disapproval.

The Plastic Mask

Symbolic masks have always been an important part of Malabar ritual, and *Kathakali* dance-drama has adapted the mask to dramatic purposes by moulding and painting colored masks on the faces of the dancers. These masks completely transform the features and have the advantage of plastic action and expression. They can frown or smile, frighten or fascinate. Like strange beings from another world in their jeweled headdresses and bright colored costumes, masked characters appear out of the night and vanish again into the void when their roles are ended. (See illustration of Ravunni Menon, Kathakali artist.)

The Woman Type in Kathakali

The feminine art of dancing in Kathakali is pre-eminently a portrayal of the ideal woman, expressing the subtle accomplishments of attraction, refined and beautiful. The erotic mood expressed in the shyly averted glance, the delicate movement of the brows, the changing expressions and the various rhythmic gaits,—coquettish, shy, seductive, majestic, angry, etc., is characteristic of the woman-type. In the movements of the dance, the fidelity of the dominant feminine mood is eloquently depicted.

Kathakali Gestures

A significant feature of Kathakali is its great versatility in expressing every kind of action, emotion and imaginative theme in terms of rhythmic movement. The poetry of words is translated into the poetry of movement. The unfolding of a flower-bud, the majestic gait of the elephant, the radiance of the moon, the sudden flight of a deer, or the erotic mood of the peacock, are amazingly depicted by the Kathakali experts.

Universality of the Hindu Dance Art

The entire gamut of human experience and expression can be rendered in the Hindu dance art, hence it has an universal appeal as a vital dance form. The technical codes of movement, posture, gesture and expression in the Hindu dance are based upon a complete understanding of human psychology and emotional behaviour.

The Hindu dance theatre, its technique, costumes and stagecraft, as well as its complex rhythms and vital use of chant and gesture, cannot but have signficance in modern artistic adventure.

The power of mind is developed and intensified through gestures which imaginatively perform acts and rhythmically express moods and qualities. New dimensions in the art of dramatic expression through the dance are apparent in the West, and India too is reviving her ancient arts in a way that give to the dance, once more, its sacred purpose in the life of the people.

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